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AN EVALUATION OF A COUPLES' RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING WORKSHOP:
THE USE OF VIDEO AND SMALL GROUP FEEDBACK IN
TEACHING COMMUNICATION SKILLS

A Dissertation Presented

By

DAVID ALFRED ANDES

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

September

1974

Counseling/Human Relations

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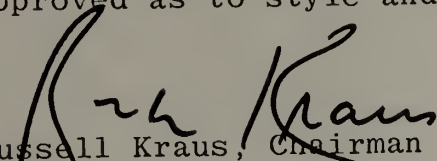
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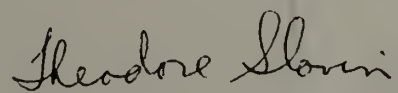
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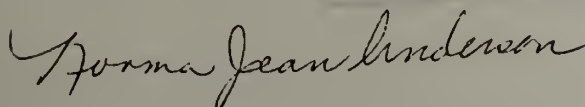
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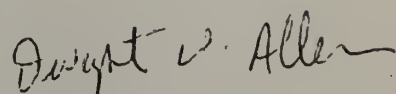

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate a workshop in relationship-building skills for couples. Special attention was given to a component within the workshop which taught Conflict Resolution skills.

The sample consisted of six volunteer student couples (N=12) at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. The training workshop was conducted in two-hour sessions one evening a week over a period of eight weeks.

The skills which were taught were:

1. Mutual Goal-Setting Skills
2. Meditation Skills
3. Massage Skills
4. Position-Stating Skills
5. Attending (Active Listening) Skills
6. Mutual Problem Solving Skills
7. Conflict Resolution Skills
8. Intimacy Assessment Skills

Video tape and small group feedback were the principle methods of instruction.

Evaluation data was determined by four measurement devices: a) the Marital Communication Inventory (MCI), a standardized inventory which measures the quality of marital communication; b) pre- and post-Conflict-Resolution-Training video tapes of each couple role playing a conflict situation;

c) participants' self-report evaluations of the workshop and of their couple communications; and d) a facilitators' log of observations of the participants' behaviors during the workshop.

The MCI was administered at the beginning of each session and again four months after the end of the workshop. The video tapes were filmed in private for each couple. The self-report evaluations were filled out by the participants at the end of the workshop and again four months later. Facilitators' log observations were recorded after each session.

The scores from the weekly MCI and the pre- and post-treatment video tapes were subjected to t tests. Significance was determined (at $P < 0.05$) for improvements in the couples' mutual communication on their video tapes. Significance was also determined (at $P < 0.05$) for the men's MCI score changes and the couples' mutual MCI score changes over the course of the workshop and for the four months following it. The women's MCI score changes were significant (at $P < 0.05$) after the session on Meditation and Massage.

The MCI scores for the women, the men, and their mutual communication were also subjected to analyses of variance. In all the analyses, the hypothesis was confirmed at $P < 0.01$ that the major variations in the data were due to time and individual differences.

An analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data supported the following conclusions: 1) the couples'

communications did improve over the course of the workshop and remained improved for the four months following the workshop; 2) the improvement in the couples' communications was related to their training in the Relationship-Building Workshop; and 3) the most influential component in the Relationship-Building Workshop was the communications (or Conflict Resolution) training.

Data from this study also indicated 1) that the Massage training was very helpful to the couples in improving their communications; and 2) that of the communications skills taught, Attending was the most influential and the most valued. Facilitators' observations suggested that sex roles (men as dominant, women as responsive) were evident as obstacles in the communications attempts of the couples.

The results of the study confirmed the appropriateness of the overall design of the workshop for helping couples improve their mutual communication. Some minor implications for redesign included increasing the length and number of the workshop sessions, and altering or replacing the Meditation training. The observations on sex role behavior suggested adding an emphasis on sex role awareness.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose of the Study	1
The Need for Training in Relationship-Skills	2
Assumptions Underlying the Relationship-Building Workshop	5
The Content of the Relationship-Building Workshop	6
The Skills Training Process	7
Contributions of the Relationship-Building Model	9
Summary	11
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	14
The Marital and Family Therapy Approach to Teaching Communication Skills	14
1. Communications Theory in Family Therapy	16
2. Techniques for Teaching Communications in Family Therapy	22
The T-Group Approach to Teaching Communication Skills	33
1. Communication Theory in T-Groups	35
2. Techniques for Teaching Communication Skills in T-Groups	38
The Behavioral Skills Approach to Teaching Communication Skills	43
Models for the Use of Video Tape Feedback With Couples	49
Summary	56
III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES	60
Participants (The "Sample")	61
Setting	65
Overview of the Project	67
Methodology	77
Evaluation in Action Research	79
Action Evaluation vs. Experimental Research	81
Instrumentation, Data Collection and Analysis	87
1. Marital Communications Inventory	87
2. Pre- and Post-Treatment Video Tapes of Simulated Conflicts	91

Table of Contents (Continued)

Chapter	Page
3. Written Participant Evaluations	93
4. Facilitators' Log	95
Summary	96
IV. RESULTS	98
Couple A's Communication Patterns	101
Couple B's Communication Patterns	110
Couple C's Communication Patterns	119
Couple D's Communication Patterns	127
Couple E's Communication Patterns	135
Couple F's Communication Patterns	144
Statistical Indications from the Video Tapes and the Marital Communications Inventory	153
t-tests	154
Analyses of Variance	156
Summary	160
V. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS	187
Indications of Change in the Individuals and Couples	188
Couple A	188
Couple B	189
Couple C	191
Couple D	193
Couple E	195
Couple F	197
Indications of Change and Change Vehicles in the Group as a Whole	199
Video Tape Scores--t-test	200
MCI Scores--t-test	203
MCI Scores--Analyses of Variance	212
Limitations of the Study	214
Summary	216
Major Implications	217
Minor Implications	217
APPENDICES	
I. Advertisement for the Relationship Building Workshop and Application for the Workshop	220
II. Detailed Description of the Relationship Building Workshop	223
III. The Marital Communication Inventory (Female and Male Forms)	231

Table of Contents (Continued)

Appendices	Page
IV. Separateness Questions	234
V. Stating a Position: A Model	236
VI. Personal Goals for the Year Ahead	238
VII. Attending: A Model	240
VIII. Stating and Hearing a Position: A Scoring Sheet	242
IX. Mutual Problem Solving: A Model	244
X. Mutual Problem Solving: A Scoring Sheet	246
XI. Conflict Resolution: A Model	248
XII. Conflict Resolution: A Scoring Sheet	250
XIII. Simulated Conflict Situations Used in the Pre- and Post-treatment Video Tapes of Each Couple	252
XIV. Post-Workshop Evaluation Questionnaire	256
XV. Four-Month Follow-Up Evaluation Questionnaire	260
XVI. Pre- and Post-Treatment Video Tape Scoring Sheets Used by the Independent Raters	263
XVII. Responses from the Post-Workshop and Follow-up Evaluation Questionnaires Not Used in the Body of this Study	265
SELECTED REFERENCES	270

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Demographic Data on Couples.....	63
2A. Couples' Workshop: A Content and Measurement Outline.....	89
2B. Couples' Workshop: A Measurement Outline.....	99
3. Couple A's Video Tape Scoring.....	104
4. Couple B's Video Tape Scoring.....	112
5. Couple C's Video Tape Scoring.....	121
6. Couple D's Video Tape Scoring.....	129
7. Couple E's Video Tape Scoring.....	137
8. Couple F's Video Tape Scoring.....	146
9. t-Test: Couples' Combined Video Scores.....	165
10. t-Test: MCI Scores from Measurements #2, Women.....	166
11. t-Test: MCI Scores from Measurements #2, Men...	167
12. t-Test: MCI Scores from Measurements #2, Mutual.....	168
13. t-Test: MCI Scores from Measurements #6, Mutual.....	169
14. t-Test: MCI Scores from Measurements #3	, Men...	170
15. t-Test: MCI Scores from Measurements #3	, Mutual.....	171
16. t-Test: MCI Scores from Measurements #8	, Men...	172
17. t-Test: MCI Scores from Measurements #1, Mutual.....	173
18. t-Test: MCI Scores from Measurements #1	, Mutual.....	174
19. t-Test: MCI Scores from Measurements #1	, Men...	175

List of Tables (Continued)

Table	Page
20. Analysis of Variance: MCI Scores for the Women....	176
21. Analysis of Variance: MCI Scores for the Women Excluding Woman B.....	177
22. Analysis of Variance: MCI Scores for the Women Excluding Woman D.....	178
23. Analysis of Variance: MCI Scores for the Men.....	179
24. Analysis of Variance: MCI Scores for the Men Excluding Man B.....	180
25. Analysis of Variance: MCI Scores for the Men Excluding Man A.....	181
26. Analysis of Variance: MCI Scores for the Couples' Mutual Communications.....	182
27. Analysis of Variance: MCI Scores for the Couples' Mutual Communications Excluding Woman A and Woman E.....	183
28. Time Series Ratings: The MCI Raw Scores.....	184
29. Time Series Ratings: The MCI Percentage Scores Compared for Partners.....	185

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. MCI Ratings of Woman A's Communication Patterns....	103
2. MCI Ratings of Man A's Communication Patterns.....	106
3. MCI Ratings of Couple A's Mutual Communication Patterns.....	109
4. MCI Ratings of Woman B's Communication Patterns....	111
5. MCI Ratings of Man B's Communication Patterns.....	115
6. MCI Ratings of Couple B's Mutual Communication Patterns.....	118
7. MCI Ratings of Woman C's Communication Patterns....	120
8. MCI Ratings of Man C's Communication Patterns.....	124
9. MCI Ratings of Couple C's Mutual Communication Patterns.....	126
10. MCI Ratings of Woman D's Communication Patterns....	128
11. MCI Ratings of Man D's Communication Patterns.....	132
12. MCI Ratings of Couple D's Mutual Communication Patterns.....	134
13. MCI Ratings of Woman E's Communication Patterns....	136
14. MCI Ratings of Man E's Communication Patterns.....	140
15. MCI Ratings of Couple E's Mutual Communication Patterns.....	143
16. MCI Ratings of Woman F's Communication Patterns....	145
17. MCI Ratings of Man F's Communication Patterns.....	149
18. MCI Ratings of Couple F's Mutual Communication Patterns.....	152
19. Comparative Changes in Women's MCI Scores from a Base Score of Zero.....	162

List of Figures (Continued)

Figure	Page
20. Comparative Changes in Men's MCI Scores from a Base Score of Zero.....	163
21. The Means of the Couples' Ratings of Themselves and Their Mutual Communications Patterns.....	164

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

This study is designed as an evaluation of a workshop in relationship-building skills for couples (RBW). It is primarily exploratory and descriptive in nature. It assumes no pretenses of being traditional experimental research. Rather it follows the model of action research developed by Kurt Lewin (1947). The intent is to amass and interpret enough evaluative data on the training workshop to provide a basis for improving it. Thus the aim of action research (and of this study) is action--creating and implementing a more effective training program for couples. (More will be said about action research and evaluation in Chapter III.)

Why is a training program in relationship-building skills for couples an appropriate and important topic for action research? The answer to this question requires only social awareness and/or a glance at the statistics compiled on divorce in the 1974 World Almanac and Book of facts:

The number and rate of divorces and annulments granted in the U.S. increased for the 10th consecutive year. The provisional estimate of the number granted in 1972, 839,000 and the rate per 1000 population, 4.0, showed increases of 9 and 8 percent above 1971 estimates respectively. The upward trend in divorce began in 1963 . . . The total increase in the rate for the 10 year period was 82 percent, with an average yearly increase from 1962 to 1967 of 4 percent and from 1967 to 1972 of 11 percent. (p. 951)

More recent estimates were also quoted:

The number of divorces and annulments granted during the 6 months ending with June was up about 8 percent to 449,000 from an estimated 415,000 for January-June a year earlier. (p. 951)

Another statistic adds an interesting dimension to this picture of broken relationships:

Provisional data for the first half of 1973 indicate that marriages are again on the upswing over the same period in 1971. The number of marriages and the rate were up 2 percent and 1 percent respectively from the figures for January-June 1972. (p. 951)

So it seems that, although there are more divorces than ever before, there are also more marriages. They may give up on particular marriages, but they have not yet given up on Marriage.

If the greater majority of couples are still intent upon getting married (and upon building heterosexual relationships), how could they be taught to improve their chances of success in these ventures? One answer may be to teach couples skills to use in building relationships with each other. That is the answer explored in the couples training workshop study.

The Need for Training in Relationship-Building Skills

Traditionally, helping couples with their relationships has taken two distinct forms: 1) pre-marital counseling and/or education and 2) marriage counseling. In the former, the couple will spend time with a clergyman, counselor, or teacher receiving some information and discussing (perhaps)

some of the popular pre-marital topics--sex, money, family. The idea is to anticipate and prepare the couple or one of the couple for some of the normal problems associated with marriage.

In marital counseling, the emphasis is curative rather than preventive. The couple's problems are defined, and they are offered various methods for improving their situation. The methods may be simple environmental changes; communication pattern changes; in-depth personality changes, i.e. psychotherapy. All methods claim some degree of success in some cases.

There is, however, a gap in these helping approaches to the couple relationship. The pre-marital help seems good at reminding and educating couples about some practical and often-overlooked details of married life. But it does fail too often to deal with the whole mode of communication between the woman and the man. Somehow, it is assumed that both partners know how to respond helpfully to each others' needs, fears, aspirations and so forth, whether expressed or not. It is assumed that they will somehow make it through whatever conflict situations arise and emerge the better for it. It is assumed that they know and can exercise skills for strengthening the bonds between them. Yet as the divorce statistics show, these assumptions can no longer be made.

Good marital counseling may be effective in dealing with these deficits in relationship-building skills, but there are

problems here also. First of all, too often couples wait until their marriage is a complexity of disasters before seeking any professional help. At that point, the curative process may be long and the motivation level of the couple low. Second, because the concern of the couple and of the counselor often is merely to relieve the unpleasantness in the marital relationship, they may be quite satisfied to stop with this achievement. They may not continue on to explore what new behaviors could add strength and richness to the relationship. In addition to this, the stigma attached to going to a counselor or therapist is a barrier for some couples. It is very difficult for them to mutually agree that there is a serious problem and that they should seek professional help together. Too often the "problem" is identified as belonging to one of the partners, and the other partner takes little or no responsibility for it. Because of the labels of "sick" and "crazy" and other colloquial equivalents, many people refuse to recognize their marital problems or to seek any professional help.

One common problem with both approaches is that they usually limit their clientele to legally married or soon-to-be married couples. There is little help advertised for couples who have not made (and possibly don't intend to make) legal contracts of marriage. Yet their need for help in relationship-building and conflict resolution may be equally great.

How, then, can these serious gaps be overcome? An answer which this study proposes is to take some of the relationship-building skills which counselors and others teach and make them more directly available to couples as part of an educational process. The couples workshop which this study evaluates is an attempt to help couples learn and utilize behavioral skills to improve their communication with each other and to enrich their relationship. The intent of the couples training, then, is to operationalize Carl Rogers' (1972) claim that "one goal of education is to assist the young person to live as a person with other persons" (p.215).

Assumptions Underlying the Relationship-Building Workshop

The design of this workshop was based, among other things, upon certain assumptions that I as a counselor/teacher make about well-functioning relationships. All of these assumptions are a reflection of personal and professional experience.

1. Effective, fulfilling intimate relationships are generally the product of intentional effort by both partners. They do not just happen (Rogers, 1972).

2. Essential ingredients for these healthy relationships are usually open and honest communication and physical and emotional contact between the partners (Bach and Deutsch, 1970; Rogers, 1972; and Perls, 1969).

3. There is ebb and flow in a healthy intimate relationship. Because the relationship is growing and evolving, partners will experience feelings of closeness sometimes and feelings of distance at other times, feelings of anger sometimes and feelings of affection at other times, etc. What keeps the relationship healthy and growing is the awareness and expression of these feelings. In dysfunctional relationships, one or both partners are stuck--being unable to move from experiencing more than one feeling (Perls, 1969).

4. The constructive use of aggression is an essential element in a growing intimate relationship. It is necessary for establishing contact with the partner, for fulfilling needs in the relationship, and for preventing physical or emotional abuse to oneself (Perls, 1969; Bach and Weyden, 1968; and Engel, 1972).

5. The reciprocal flow of affection is vital for a fulfilling, growing intimate relationship (Rogers, 1972).

6. Relationships can be built, improved, strengthened. This can occur before catastrophe or crisis calls for relationship repair. Partners can be taught relationship-building skills to heighten the chances of success in an intimate relationship (Rogers, 1972).

The Content of the Relationship-Building Workshop

The Couples' Relationship-Building Workshop (RBW) began on October 23, 1973 and continued for seven successive

Tuesday evenings. The meetings were about two hours in length and were held at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst. The workshop participants were six student couples who had responded to advertising. Co-facilitators for the RBW were Susan Wartman and I.

A description and rationale for the content of each session of the RBW is given in Chapter III. Appendix II provides a more detailed account of the actual workshop. A brief outline of the content of the workshop is given here:

Session	I	Introductions Trust Building
Session	II	Meditation and Massage
Session	III	Defining and Stating a Position (maintaining individuality)
Session	IV	Attending (active listening)
Session	V	Mutual Problem Solving
Session	VI	Conflict Resolution
Session	VII	Developing Intimacy
Session	VIII	RBW Evaluation Mutual Creative Expression

The basic schema of the RBW was a progression from building group and couple trust, to teaching basic communication and problem-solving skills, to having each couple employ these skills in dealing with issues of conflict and intimacy.

The Skills Training Process

In this workshop we were concerned with teaching couples certain behavioral skills to improve their communications with each other and to strengthen their relationships. Although

many people have attempted to teach these kinds of skills to couples, the training process utilized in this workshop probably owes most to the microcounseling and media therapy work of Ivey (1971). As has been previously mentioned, it was he along with Normington, Miller, Morrill, and Haase (1968), who behaviorally defined and taught the Attending behaviors. In addition to this, however, Ivey et al. (1968) also developed the microcounseling process as a training instrument for counselors. This process makes use of brief (about five-minute) video-taped interviews between counselor and client. The counselor receives instruction in the specific skill he/she is to learn, and she/he receives the feedback of watching her/himself attempt to exercise this skill in a counseling session. Thus single skills are taught with video feedback. In addition, other instructional aids are often used to reinforce the learning process--a programmed text, live or video skill modeling, homework, etc. (Ivey, 1971).

Higgins, Ivey, and Uhlemann (1970) derived the media therapy model from the microcounseling model. The modification was that instead of teaching communications skills to counselors to use with clients, the skills were taught directly to the clients themselves. Using this video feedback approach they were able to teach the skill of direct, mutual communication in dyads.

Contributions of the Relationship-Building Model

The present model for teaching communication and CR skills to couples extends the work of Ivey (1968, 1970, 1971, 1974) and others in several ways:

1. The CR skills are taught as components within the context of the larger relationship-building workshop. This allows couples time and opportunity to develop more openness between them and with other couples in the workshop. It provides the richness of a variety of complementary learning experiences with the partner. It creates a more wholistic (and therefore more realistic) approach to the couple relationship. And it makes dealing with couple conflict perhaps less threatening, simply because it is a natural evolution in the whole process of the relationship-building workshop.

2. Rather than the single skills approach, which is more typical of media therapy and microcounseling, this model attempts to combine the teaching of several related skills into skill batteries or clusters (such as Stating a Position, Attending, Mutual Problem Solving). Part of this idea is that some of the skills seem to naturally blend together and teaching them separately sometimes seems more difficult. Another part of the idea is that each cluster is a unit that serves a particular function. In order for the unit to function well, all the skills need to work well together. Thus teaching them together helps the learner blend them into a

useful style of his/her own. The final reason for teaching the skills in clusters or components is economy. We did not have enough time to spend an entire session on each skill if we were to teach seventeen of them. Even if we had had enough time, it seems likely that such a process could have become boring eventually.

3. This approach brings the group back to couples skills training. Although participants did spend large amounts of time in their respective couples, they also had the benefit of some experiences and feedback from other men and women. This provided some necessary outside perspective and support for each person and it reinforced the theme of each person's value in her/himself--not just in the couple formation.

4. This modification is related to the second one. Not only were skills taught in clusters or components, but these clusters or components were then combined to form one total CR process. Thus, in effect, all seventeen skills were connected in a chain of behaviors to create a methodology or approach to dealing with conflict in an intimate relationship. Thus, as in gestalt therapy, the whole is more than the sum of the parts.

5. This workshop was created specifically for couples--not for casual dyads or beginning counselors. Thus content and the processes were designed to be relevant and realistic for these particular student couples. As is the style with

action research, the design for each week's workshop was usually modified by our previous experience with these couples.

Summary

This study is an evaluation of a workshop in relationship-building skills for couples. Its style is that of action research--evaluating action (the workshop) in order to take more action (other workshops or other sessions of this workshop).

A workshop in relationship-building skills for couples is one possible answer to a dire need in our society--as the U.S. divorce statistics indicate. Pre-marital counseling and education attempt to prepare couples for marriage, but they often do not educate them in the basic skills of communicating with each other. Marriage counseling may teach some of these skills, but its approach is remedial not preventive. Thus there are many people whom it does not reach and others whom it does not reach in time. This relationship-building workshop attempts to fill that gap by teaching couples the necessary communication and problem-solving skills before a crisis occurs in the relationship.

This training program is based on the assumptions that healthy intimate relationships 1) are the product of hard work, not luck; 2) usually contain open and honest communication and physical and emotional contact between partners; 3) contain an

ebb and flow of different kinds of feelings; 4) can and must use aggression constructively; 5) contain a reciprocal flow of affection; and 6) can be strengthened before a crisis necessitates repair.

The Relationship-Building Workshop was held at the University of Massachusetts in the fall of 1973 and met for eight successive Tuesday evenings. The participants were six student couples who answered local adds for the free training. Each of the sessions was focused on a separate but related theme. The themes progressed from building group and couple trust, to teaching basic communication and problem-solving skills, to having each couple employ these skills in dealing with issues of conflict and intimacy.

The skills training approach, which forms the principle methodology of this workshop, is an outgrowth of the work in microcounseling and media therapy done by Ivey, et al. (1968, 1970, 1971, 1974). That work involved teaching single skills with the aid of video feedback. The CR skills training program devised here differs from Ivey's work in that 1) the skills are taught within the larger context of the relationship-building workshop; 2) the skills are presented in a cluster with other complementary skills rather than singly; 3) more use is made of other participants in the group for feedback and support; 4) all the communications and problem-solving skills are combined to create a specific

methodology or approach to dealing with couple conflict; and
5) this workshop is designed specifically for heterosexual
student couples.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the major methods used to teach communication and conflict resolution (CR) skills in the workshop.

A familiar axiom in family therapy states that "a person cannot not communicate" (Satir, 1967). In this simple truth-in-brevity lies the basic difficulty in attempting to review literature on interpersonal communication. The field is vast. This review will be limited to those approaches which 1) recognize and label communication skills and 2) attempt to teach these specific skills to couples in a specific manner.

The review will focus on four approaches which seem to be the most direct forerunners of the workshop approach to teaching communication skills to couples. The four approaches to be reviewed are:

1. Family and marital therapy
2. T-groups
3. Behavioral skills training programs
4. Media therapy (use of video feedback)

The Marital and Family Therapy Approach to Teaching Communication Skills

Although marital counseling therapy and family counseling therapy have historically different roots (Olson, 1970),

they are reasonably similar and are presented together in this review. Both are notably weak in theoretical bases, and both borrow from each other in techniques (Olson, 1970). The family therapists (historically being psychiatrists) tend to produce the most literature, and most of the references in this chapter will reflect their practices.

It is important to note that this chapter will focus only on the work of the family and marital therapists as they attempt to teach communication skills to their clients or patients. There are many other aspects and schools of family therapy especially which do not focus directly on this aspect. However, the group for the Advancement of Psychiatry in 1970 conducted a survey of 312 family therapists. A high percentage of them listed three primary goals for family therapy: 1) improved communication (85%); 2) improved autonomy and individuation (56%); and 3) improved empathy (56%) (Olson, 1970, p. 515).¹

The survey further indicated two basic orientations: 1) emphasizing alteration of behavior, using communication theory and objective measures of behavior change; and 2) altering subjective feelings and reactions to family experiences.²

¹ It seems to me that these three do go together. In fact they all constitute parts of the Conflict Resolution model which we taught in this workshop.

² Although the second orientation is involved incidentally, the focus of my work and of this review is on the first--using a communications approach to effect behavior change.

Another way of clarifying the focus of this review, then, is to see it in behavioral terms. As Krumboltz says, "I shall argue that stating goals in terms of observable behavior will prove more useful than stating goals in terms of such internal states as 'self-understanding' and 'self-acceptance'" (1965, p. 153). Gomberg (1961), in a similar vein, emphasizes the importance of altering couple interaction rather than trying to treat the internal states and individual neuroses of each partner:

A "good" marriage and a "good" family do not have as a pre-requisite two neurosis-free individuals. The constructive and destructive elements and their continuation in the interaction are at least as critical to the ultimate balance or equilibrium attained in the marriage. It is possible to offer treatment for certain discordant marriage situations and to achieve substantial improvement in these relations, without working through all the unconscious neurotic complications in each partner. (p. 270)

Thus this review will not deal with internal states so much as it will with observable behaviors (i.e. behaviors which are visible to others). The focus of this chapter will be on the theory and methods these therapists use in teaching certain communications skills (or behaviors) to their clients.

1. Communications Theory in Family Therapy. Because the theory of communications in family therapy is so influential as background for other communications approaches, it seems important to spend time relating its essential parts. I have selected Don Jackson, Virginia Satir, and Jay Haley who are known as primary representatives of communications

theory in family therapy. Their writings and their examples have been definitive in this area for several years.

Beels and Ferber (1969), in their review of family therapy, cited some axioms of human communication implied and explicit in the work of Zuk, Haley, and Jackson. They seem to see human communication as a chess game. The family therapist must analyze the relationship of the partners at present, discover the rules that govern their play, and determine his/her next move. Certain generalizations seem to persist for these and other communications therapists:

a. All behavior is communicative. This ideal, in fact, may be carried to extremes by viewing physical symptoms as a "product of, or a way of handling a relationship in which there are incompatible definitions of the relationship" (Haley, 1963, p. 132). For example, a wife may develop a lower backache or a headache which will prevent sexual relations from occurring except on her own terms. Her husband can't force her without appearing brutal, and she "can't help" the ailment. Thus the symptom becomes a "nonverbal message: It's not I who does not (or does) want to do this; it is something outside my control, e.g. my nerves, illness, anxiety, bad eyes, alcohol, my upbringing, the communists, or my wife" (Watzalick, Beavin & Jackson, 1967, p. 80).

b. Messages have "report" and "command" components. The "report" is simply the verbal content in the message. The "command" aspect defines the nature of the relationship

between the two parties (Olson, p. 519). For example, a wife has to determine what "command" accompanies her husband's "report," "I don't feel so well." Is it "take care of me," "leave me alone," "understand me" or what? Difficulty may occur when the "command" (relationship) part is not clearly worked out.

Bolte (1970, pp. 34-35) excerpts from Jackson some of the possible responses one partner may make to the other's message: 1) confirmation--he/she responds so as to validate the feelings of the partner; 2) rejection--he/she may reject what is being suggested but still recognize it and affirm the partner; and 3) disconfirmation--he/she fails to recognize the relationship-related question (the "command") and really ignores the person. This is usually detrimental to the communication and to the relationship.

c. In the family, "command" messages are patterned as rules. They constrain and order the behaviors of family members. They prescribe the way members will relate to each other. Haley (in Bolte, 1970, p. 35) says:

Human behavior becomes patterned and can often be predicted. Couples have implicit and explicit rules that govern their relationship. Rules are reinforced (what to talk about or avoid, for example). But if one is broken, often conflict results.

d. Inability to change the rules is a system pathology or dysfunction of the family. It happens when two rules paradoxically negate each other: an operating rule and a rule-about-rules that denies it. For example there may be a rule

(either explicit or implicit) that the wife is supposed to give her husband sexual pleasure in certain ways at certain times. The rule-about-rules, however, may be that they are not to discuss sexual matters with one another. Thus the second rule negates the first.

Bolte sees marital conflict as 1) disagreements about rules for living together, 2) disagreements about who is to set the rules, and 3) attempts to enforce incompatible rules. The first and third may be more easily resolved than the second--who makes the rules, is boss, controls, etc. (1970, p. 35)?

e. The family therapist must install her/himself as the metacommunicator--the person who communicates about communication. She/he becomes the change-maker of the family. She/he must intervene in the endless, cyclical game and change the rules. She/he may also specify the issues to focus on. She/he is the "go-between" but not the judge (Beels & Ferber, 1969, pp. 188-190).

In addition to these axioms, Jay Haley, in his study of the communications base of schizophrenia (1959) offered some more insight on communications theory. He holds that one is always defining his/her relationship with another person, even if he/she gives up control to the other person. The only exception to this is in negating what he/she says--i.e. giving a contradictory message. Thus he/she withdraws responsibility for what he/she says.

The communication of a message is usually in four parts:

- 1) I
- 2) am saying something
- 3) to you
- 4) in this situation

A person can avoid defining the relationship by negating any of all these elements. He/she may 1) deny it is he/she communicating, 2) deny something was communicated, 3) deny it was communicated to the other person, or 4) deny the context in which it was communicated. With these denials, contact and communication are avoided. In fact one person can stop another's attempts at relating with these incongruent communications.

Virginia Satir (1967) also adds some important concepts not already mentioned. She distinguishes between functional and dysfunctional communicators: She describes a functional communicator as a person who can

a) firmly state his case, b) yet at the same time clarify and qualify what he says, c) as well as ask for feedback, d) and be receptive to feedback when he gets it. (p. 70)

Both the sender and the receiver have responsibility to make their verbal communication clear.

The dysfunctional communicator send incomplete messages and operates from untested assumptions and generalizations. He/she will make assumptions about communications that will get him/her in trouble: 1) that one instance is an example

of all instances; 2) that others share his/her feelings, thoughts, perceptions; 3) that his/her perceptions and evaluations are complete; 4) that what he/she perceived or evaluated won't change; 5) that he/she must dichotomize into black and white terms--only two alternatives; 6) that characteristics he/she attributes to people and things are actually part of those people and things; 7) that he/she can know what another is thinking and feeling and vice versa (pp. 63-67).

Satir (1967) also notes the difference between congruent and incongruent messages. A congruent message is "one in which two or more messages are sent at different levels, but none of these seriously contradicts the other." An incongruent communication occurs when these different level messages do seriously contradict each other (p. 82). For example, one person might say smiling, to another, "I'm angry at you." The verbal and non-verbal messages here are incongruent.

Satir says all messages also contain a metacommunication, or a message about the message. Both verbally and nonverbally, they may indicate what kind of a message they are communicating and how it is to be received (1967, p. 76). Satir indicates that all messages have at some level a "Validate me" component. They ask for some sort of agreement, or sympathy, or affirmation. Often this request is hidden, unknown to perhaps both sender and receiver (p. 81).

Wynne (in Olson, 1970) introduces the concept of pseudomutuality to illuminate another wrinkle in the communication

process. In describing two human processes in the family--relating to others and developing a personal identity--Wynne postulates three possible outcomes: mutuality, non-mutuality, and pseudo-mutuality.

In pseudo-mutuality, there is tremendous emphasis on fitting together as a family at the expense of self-differentiation. The dilemma is this: divergence is seen as disrupting the relationship and must be avoided; but no divergence means no growth of the relationship. Thus there can be also no humor, spontaneity, novelty, or zest. There occurs a desperate preoccupation with family harmony. All attempts at divergence are diffused.³

General mutuality, in contrast, assumes and permits individualism and divergence. Thus the individuals and their relationships are permitted to grow. This becomes a very important concept in communications theory, in that a person must have a position to communicate before he/she can communicate it. If there is no individual position, then there is no interaction and no growth.

2. Techniques for Teaching Communications in Family Therapy. There are many things that family and marital therapists teach about communication, simply by the fact that

³ This is very similar to Murray Bowen's concept of the "undifferentiated family ego mass," in which it is impossible to tell where one ego leaves off and another begins in a family. They are so inextricably bound together (Bowen, 1965).

they are authority figures and may influence their clients by whatever behaviors they exhibit. Forgiving them their own difficulties in communicating with others that they may unintentionally model, there are still some specific techniques and actions which they employ quite intentionally to facilitate communication in the family or couple. The following is a distillation of some of these techniques and actions.

a. The therapist models clarity and perception in communication. She/he explains in simple terms what she/he is doing. She/he states her/his own feelings and enters the session as a communicating person (Satir, 1967; Avasar, 1973; Kempler, 1965). The therapist is also an "ego ideal" for the couple or family, and a model of a good listener (Bolte, 1970).

b. Partners are not allowed to talk about each other in the presence of the therapist. No such gossiping. Instead, the therapist has the partners confront each other with what they want to say about the other. The therapist acts as supervisor for this encounter which he/she has set up (Satir, 1967; Bell, 1961; Bolte, 1970). The therapist may also assign some issue for the couple or family to work on (Bardill, 1966).

c. The therapist functions clearly as the communications expert and directs the focus of the session on the communications process rather than the content (Bell, 1961;

Satir, 1967; Bardill, 1966; Kempler, 1965). This begins to draw the couple's attention to their own interactional behaviors.

d. One of the norms or rules that is often promoted by the therapist is that the couple deal with whatever is going on between them here and now. This is to prevent escape into the greater security and obscurity of past events or outside concerns, which may be real enough, but which simply reinforce the tendency of the couple not to deal with what is really happening and observable in the present. This is a lesson in sticking to the subject (Satir, 1967; Bell, 1961; Bardill, 1966; Avasar, 1973).

e. The therapist observes the interactional behaviors of the couple or family, picks out patterns of behavior, and gives them feedback on what he/she sees and hears. Who is doing what to whom and how is it perceived by others? This again pushes the members to become more aware of their communication patterns (Kempler, 1965; Bardill, 1966). Beels and Ferber (1969) even use video tape playbacks to demonstrate repeated sequences or patterns to members. They point out gestures and postures that keep the sequence going. Then they ask the members to change these monitoring signals to see if they can stop the sequence.

f. The Therapist tries to find out what the rules of the family are and who makes them. He/she tries to make explicit the ones which are implicit so that members will not

be unaware victims of a system they don't understand. The rules about communication are especially important to communication. What kind of communications are tolerated, forbidden, encouraged and when (Jackson, 1965; Haley, 1963; Satir, 1972)? Avasar (1973) suggests that the family goals and structure also be made explicit for the same reasons.

g. The therapist prohibits blaming. She/he can ease defensiveness by dismissing the dichotomies of "right" and "wrong" and "truth" and "falsehood." Attention is drawn to the importance of feelings in determining behavior. More emphasis is placed on getting right than on being right (Bardill, 1966; Satir, 1967; Bolte, 1970). Members are asked to "take responsibility for" (not disown or deny) their own behaviors and feelings, and this is done on a "no fault" basis. People are not condemned and punished as being guilty parties. Thus a positive "mutual problem solving" attitude is fostered instead of a negative judging approach. People are less afraid to "own up to" their part in the problem.

h. The therapist may choose to point out the "games" that he sees the members playing with each other. "Games" in this context refers to "an ongoing series of complementary ulterior transactions progressing to a well-defined, predictable outcome. Descriptively it is a recurring set of transactions, often repetitious, superficially plausible, with a concealed motivation" (Berne, 1967, p. 48). Basically, games are dishonest attempts to manipulate another person, rather

than to directly state one's feelings, needs, and wants. Couples are often familiar with games they play with each other such as "Confusion" where one or both people are unable to make any decisive moves because of the conflicting and ambiguous messages they are sending, or "Courtroom" where both partners try to prove each other guilty of some wrongs. The therapist tries to spot these recurring games and to help the members see how the games block their communication. As the couple begin to see the effects of the game, they begin to feel more power to change their interactional patterns (Bardill, 1966).

i. The therapist carefully avoids taking sides or slipping into the role of being the judge of right and wrong. He/she relates to the marital or familial unit but does not get tied into its complexities (Bardill, 1966). Instead, he/she will try to maintain a non-judgmental attitude, functioning as an impartial advisor. This way he/she does not alienate members and all can come to trust him/her more (Bolte, 1970). This also demonstrates to the members that everyone's input is needed and valued and again that communication does not involve a "witchhunt" for the guilty party.

j. The therapist always encourages people to be aware of, to value, and to express their feelings directly. She/he emphasizes the importance of each person's subjective experience and the role this plays in communication and in family functioning (Bardill, 1966; Kempler, 1965). She/he encourages

the members to use all the senses, not just the brain, in functioning in this relationship (Avasar, 1973).

k. The therapist will offer support whenever she/he feels it is needed. She/he will ask for feelings, will reflect some content, will clarify messages (Bardill, 1966). She/he may bring in some personal experiences of her/himself or of some other couple or family that would offer support to the members (Bolte, 1970). She/he may encourage quiet members to speak and may limit the more vocal members in order to insure that all are heard. This will convey to the members the importance of being supportive instead of competitive or condemning of one another. Thus the tone is again set positively instead of negatively.

l. Attention will be paid also to the non-verbal messages that members are sending. The therapist may ask a member to verbalize a message that he/she seems to be communicating with his/her body or tone of voice (Bardill, 1966). Also if there is some apparent contradiction between non-verbal expression and verbal expression--if the words don't match the behaviors--the therapist may point this out to the person and try to explore the meaning behind this (Bolte, 1970; Avasar, 1973). Thus the therapist seeks to draw out and clarify the total communication the person is sending. This teaches a person to become more aware of "hidden" parts of his message and to express them more openly. For instance, a man who says "I'm listening" to his wife, while his body and

eyes are turned away from her, is belying his words with his actions. Probably there is more to his message that he could say, such as "I'm listening only because people are watching now" or "I'm listening but I'm not really listening. I'm really bored with hearing you talk." The therapist would try to have the man articulate the total message openly and honestly.

m. The therapist really encourages active listening. In fact she/he may invoke a rule such as "no interruptions" (Kempler, 1965) or may force people to repeat to other members the message they received from them in order to make sure the message was clearly communicated and received (Satir, 1967; Bolte, 1970). Even though this may seem awkward or unnecessary at first, members soon realize the value of this when they discover that many messages they had assumed were clear were actually either miscommunicated or misunderstood. This is a common assumption, especially with people who have been together for a long time. They easily assume they know the mind and feelings of the other. Active listening, then clarifies communication and encourages more accurate responses. It is an essential element in communications skills. As Avasar (1973) says,

One of my functions in family growth is to help people learn to talk and listen, to express what they think and feel, and also be quiet, check and clarify the messages rather than jumping to conclusions based on "old tapes." (p. 180)

n. Generally therapists try to get people to "take responsibility" for their behaviors and statements. People often deny these by projecting their feelings and desires onto others, by suppressing their feelings, by forgetting, by becoming confused, by developing physical symptoms, by generalizing, etc. The therapist presses the person to make "I statements"--"I feel . . .," "I want . . .," "I see . . .," "I am doing . . ." (Kempler, 1965). Sometimes asking questions is prohibited, when this is seen as a ploy to avoid stating one's own position (Bolte, 1970). When a person "owns" and states his/her position, communication can begin with a much firmer base, much more honest. This means, too, that a person speaks only for him/herself and not for other members. Each member is responsible to speak for him/herself. No member is assumed to mindread another (Bolte, 1970).

o. Part of "taking responsibility" for one's feelings and behaviors may be looking deeper into hidden motivations behind actions and words. So the therapist will probe to find out the real intent (Bolte, 1970). Oftentimes the deeper motivations are either not known or not expressed; thus, the communication message is incomplete. The therapist may become suspicious of this from the person's voice tone or behaviors, or he/she may rely on his/her own intuition or knowledge of personality theory and functioning. Once these hidden motivations are exposed, communications can occur on

a much fuller and more realistic basis. There will be less need for "games" and maneuvers.

p. Physical positions of members are important indicators to the therapist of their present relationship to each other. The therapist may point out their seating arrangements, for example, to see what this means to the members. Or she/he may have the members take turns "sculpting" the family--that is, placing members physically in some static sculpture arrangement in order to emphasize the interactional relationships of the family as they see them (Avasar, 1973). She/he may also reposition the members in order to change the interactional patterns (Bolte, 1970). For example, placing partners face-to-face at a distance of four feet may make talking to each other much easier (and possibly more uncomfortable) than their facing away from each other at a distance of eight feet with two kids in between them.

q. Oftentimes, because of the way they feel and perceive the world, people distort the messages of other people when they receive them. If they are feeling afraid or insecure, they may hear a message as threatening when in reality it is not. If they are feeling angry, they may hear the message only partially or not at all. Part of the job of the therapist, then, is to spot these distortions in the receiver and to help him/her become aware of them (Avasar, 1973). This will probably also help the receiver state more of his/her own position, as he/she becomes more aware of his/her

feeling state. It will emphasize to all members the importance of checking out how a message is heard so that its meaning is not distorted, for once this distortion occurs unnoticed, the rest of the communication is doomed to inaccuracy.

r. It seems important, especially in a problem-solving phase of communications, that members be encouraged to explore alternatives, to make choices, and to make mistakes. The therapist must sometimes attack and challenge the demand to always be right that is present in some families. So long as this demand is active, members will be reluctant to choose, to take risks, to make mistakes, and they will look for someone to blame if things go wrong. So the therapist will teach a new family norm: "It's all right to make mistakes; you will not be punished for that" (Avasar, 1973). Once this norm is accepted and activated, communication and problem solving can flow much more freely and productively. The threat of punishment does not loom as such a deterrent to action.

s. Another deterrent to good communication is the sticky, all-encompassing "undifferentiated ego mass" of which Bowen speaks (1965). Because each member functions only as a component of the undifferentiated family and not as an individual, there are no clear and distinct positions and thus no real interactions. An example of this would be a woman whose "whole life" is "her man." The communication is smothered in

undifferentiation. The therapist must encourage and appreciate individual efforts (Avasar, 1973). She/he must, through support and confrontation, lead members to feel and express more of their own individuality. She/he encourages and coerces people to assume an "I stand" position on issues, so that they begin to know themselves and be known apart from their place in the family. Once this occurs, chances are greater for individual growth and for interactional growth as a family.

t. Towards the end of the session and/or at various intervals in the session, one member may be asked to summarize what has occurred (Bardill, 1966). This has the effect of again focusing the attention on the communication process and of training each member to be her/his own communications monitor. It legitimizes metacommunication or communicating about the communication.

u. Sometimes an issue that a couple or family has worked on in the session does not get resolved. When this occurs, a therapist may give them the homework to continue working on the issue at home and to return next session ready to discuss what happened. This is to facilitate the carry-over from therapy session to everyday home life (Bardill, 1966). Other specific homework assignments may also be given, depending on what the sessions have been focusing on. For example, early in family therapy, each person may be asked to write-up a list of changes he would like to see made in the family.

The T-Group Approach to Teaching Communication Skills

In the 1940's a social psychologist named Kurt Lewin was directing a lot of attention to the problem of using psychology to bring about some social change. One of the contributions Lewin made was his extensive work with group dynamics. In 1945 he established the Research Center for Group Dynamics to study groups. Lewin also strongly influenced Ronald Lippitt who, with Kenneth Benne and Leland Bradford, brought about the origin of the "T-group." In 1947 these three men formed the National Training Laboratories to

talk about groups and the use of groups in training and re-education. We talked about the use of sociodramatic methods and the necessity of focusing on skills for rebuilding relationships as well as knowledge as a necessary ingredient for learning which transferred from a learning situation to the life work and action outside the educational situation. (Bradford, 1967, p. 134)

With the establishment of NTL, the T-group (or Training group) began to grow and evolve. With the influence of first clinical and then humanistic psychology, it prospered and fathered numerous offspring, variously known as encounter groups, sensitivity groups, marathon groups, personal growth groups, etc. The concern here, however, will be limited to a review of the contributions of the T-group itself to the task of teaching communications skills to people.

Shein and Bennis (1965) list what they believe to be the goals implicit in most T-groups:

- a. a spirit of inquiry or a willingness to hypothesize and experiment with one's role in the world;

- b. an expanded interpersonal consciousness or an increased awareness of more things about more people;
- c. an increased authenticity in interpersonal relations or simply feeling freer to be oneself and not feeling compelled to play a role;
- d. an ability to act in a collaborative and independent manner with peers, superiors, and subordinates, rather than in authoritative or hierarchical terms; and
- e. an ability to resolve conflict situations through problem solving rather than through horse trading, coercion, or power manipulation. (p. 15)

It is interesting to note that every one of these goals has some importance in the process of good interpersonal communication. Thus the T-group really is an active vehicle for working on communication skills and processes.

A further note from Shein and Bennis (1965) is of particular importance in regards to goal "e"--dealing with conflict resolution. They characterize the T-group approach as a problem solving orientation to conflict. This

implies that if conflict does exist, it must be recognized and confronted as such instead of being denied, suppressed, or compromised. Then, once recognized, conflict must be managed and resolved through understanding its causes and consequences fully and then bringing to light all data relevant to further understanding. Finally, the conflict must be resolved by consulting with all relevant individuals and groups and by exploring under conditions of trust and confidence all the possible alternatives for solution. If these conditions are satisfied, then we can say that conflict was managed and resolved through rational means. (p. 34)

This problem-solving approach to CR is an essential ingredient in the T-group and a vital part of the CR model used in my workshop with couples. It depends on the establishment of clear, honest communications between the partners

involved. It is now time to look closer at some of the guidelines taught in T-groups to achieve such communication.

1. Communication Theory in T-Groups. Two things must happen in the communication process between two people if that communication is to be complete and accurate: first, partner A must understand partner B's message and let Partner B know that this is the case; second, partner A must help partner B understand partner A's message. Put simply both must understand and be understood. The T-group teaches certain skills and guidelines for both. First, here are those for understanding another:

a. Paraphrasing. This is an essential component of active listening. It requires that a person listen carefully to what the other is saying and try to feed back the message to the other as it is understood. If, after this, the speaker thinks he/she has been misunderstood, then he/she can try to clarify the part of the message which was misconstrued by the receiver (Wallen, 1968, A). The receiver can then again paraphrase the message to insure accurate reception. This insures that the message broadcast was the message received.

b. Reflecting Feelings. Messages contain not only verbal, but emotional content as well. Thus part of understanding a message is being able to hear the feelings which are being expressed and to let the speaker know that these

are heard. The receiver will check out what he/she believes to be the speaker's feelings.

c. Checking out assumptions. Rather than make false assumptions about what the speaker is feeling or thinking, it is far better to check out these perceptions with the speaker. Then the receiver has a much more solid assessment of reality to work with (Wallen, 1968, B; Wallen, 1968, C).

d. Seek information. The listener asks questions directly relevant to what the speaker has said if there are uncertainties to be cleared up (Wallen, 1968, C).

e. Distinguishing fact from opinion. It is important for the receiver to know the difference between her/his opinion of the speaker and facts about the speaker. An utterance such as "why are you so unreasonable?" clearly is not a factual evaluation of the other and probably will serve only to block communications further (National Training Laboratories, 1970, A).

f. Accepting. This is tough. It means allowing the speaker to present his/her position without argument. There must be no judgments rendered on the speaker, no name-calling, no accusations or imputing undesirable motives to the other, no commands or orders, and no sarcasm. The job of the receiver is at this point merely to understand the speaker and let her/him know that she/he is understood.

Now when the receiver becomes speaker, it is her/his time to make known her/his responses to the former speaker.

Here are helpful guidelines and skills for doing that:

a. Reporting feelings. This is a great skill. It requires being able to name or identify a feeling and to convey this clearly to the listener. This may be done by labeling. For example, "I feel angry." It may be done by similes, i.e., "I feel like I'm carrying the world on my shoulders." It may be a report of what kind of action the feeling urges one to do, i.e., "I'd like to smack you." Or it may simply be a figure of speech, such as "I'm glowing all over." Communication is clearest when a person's non-verbal expression matches his/her verbal expression (Wallen, 1968, D).

b. Giving feedback. The basic job of the listener, which includes reporting feelings, is that of giving feedback. That essentially means the listener telling the speaker how he/she (the listener) was affected by what was said or done. The giving of feedback, however, is also a great skill. There are certain criteria for effective feedback:

1. It is descriptive, not evaluative. By describing one's own reaction, the recipient of the feedback is free to use it however he/she wants to. This non-evaluative approach reduces the need for the recipient to react defensively.

2. It is specific, not general. Thus the recipient knows exactly what behavior and time is being spoken of.
3. It takes into account the needs of both the giver and the receiver. Otherwise it becomes destructive of one person or the other.
4. It is directed towards behavior the receiver can do something about. Otherwise this would be very frustrating to the receiver.
5. It is well-timed, hopefully occurring as soon after the behavior in question as possible.
6. It is checked to insure clear communication (National Training Laboratories, 1970, B).

c. Owning a position. It is very important that a person state his/her position clearly. (This is the same as "taking responsibility for" one's behaviors that was referred to in the family therapy section.) A person must not deny her/his own feelings, thoughts, behaviors. Statements are encouraged instead of questions. Verbal and non-verbal communications should be congruent. Jokes are taken seriously (National Training Laboratories, 1970, B).

2. Techniques for Teaching Communication Skills in T-Groups. What does the trainer do in a T-group to help teach the participants communication skills? Here are some trainer behaviors that help do the job.

a. Giving feedback. The trainer will give feedback to participants on their behaviors and he/she will encourage others to do the same. He/she may make explicit the rules for good feedback or teach them implicitly (Dyer, 1970).

Clark (1973) has outlined how learning takes place with the feedback process. a) Member A exhibits some persistent, incongruous behavior. He is said to be incongruous if others see him as not being fully aware of his own feelings and reactions, or as not communicating those feelings of which he is aware. b) To the extent that A's incongruous behavior is neither too trivial nor too gross, it is explicitly and persistently reflected back to A by some of the other members. c) To the extent such reflection causes A to perceive those aspects of his own behavior which are at variance with his self-concept, he is in a psychological crisis. d) To the extent such persistent reflection comes from members who are perceived by A as congruent and to the extent A perceives the group as having some degree of empathy and positive regard for him, there is a new integration by A. His self-concept enlarges to include the reality with which he has been confronted. e) A's behavior tends to change in line with his new integration and he therefore tends to be more congruent.

b. Focusing on process. One of the primary functions of the trainer is to call the attention of the group to processes which have gone on. The trainer helps the group become aware of the nature of its interactions. For example,

the trainer might say, "were you aware that only two people voiced opinions and yet a decision was made?" This new consciousness of process is a first step in changing process (Dyer, 1970; Underwood, 1973).

c. Drawing out feelings and reactions. The trainer will use question or comment to ellicit from others their responses to the behavior of others. For example, the trainer might ask, "Ed, how do you feel about what Kathy said?" (Dyer, 1970). This emphasis on the importance of feelings will be picked up and used as a group norm for working on communications.

d. Structuring learning situations. The trainer purposefully may set up certain situations and highlight others in order to give members feedback on the way they're perceived by others (Tannenbaum, Weschler, & Massarik, 1973). He/she may design certain exercises or provide certain observation forms for group members.

e. Introducing theory. The trainer may at times function as an expert by bringing in information from research or his/her own personal experience. A cognitive orientation may make clearer what is being emphasized in the group experience (Dyer, 1970; Tannenbaum, Weschler, & Massarik, 1973).

f. Clarification. There are times when the trainer can help by clarifying or defining a problem or goal (Dyer, 1970). Thus he teaches clarification and problem definition to the members.

g. Summarizing. Throughout the group and at the end, the trainer may help the group summarize what has happened so far. This again draws attention to the process that has occurred and to what it means (Dyer, 1970).

h. Modeling. An important function of the trainer is that of a role model. She/he by her/his activity, acceptance of criticism, non-evaluative comments, willingness to deviate from planned programs, and ability to raise questions and express feelings demonstrates good communication to others. Her/his behavior helps form the group atmosphere of acceptance and freedom of expression in which interpersonal problems can be discussed (Tannenbaum, Weschler, & Massarik, 1973). The trainer may also helpfully model compromising, admitting error, "coming half way" in a conflict (Underwood, 1973).

i. Introducing new values. This may happen implicitly or explicitly, but it is important, because some of the old values prohibit or retard open, direct communication. Thus by the feelings she/he reflects, the comments clarified, and the behaviors demonstrated, the trainer gives the group new norms and values to wrestle with (Tannenbaum, Weschler, and Massarik, 1973). For example, the trainer may promote openness instead of guardedness; expression instead of inhibition of feelings.

j. Keeping communication channels open. The trainer must sometimes be a traffic cop, limiting the overtalkative

members and encouraging the quieter ones. He/she must help people to stay with their encounters even if it gets a bit uncomfortable for them (Underwood, 1973). He/she will encourage, commend, and confront--providing support to those who need it.

It seems that many of the same methods are used to teach communication skills in both family therapy and T-groups. Many of the underlying theories seem to be the same. Main differences seem to be in a family group as opposed to a stranger group--thus a family brings its past, present, and future with it, all its patterns, rules, goals, etc. The power of its ongoing system is vast, and the therapist must work hard to avoid being overcome by it. She/he must aim for changes in the total system, not just in individuals. In the T-group, communication is generally learned with strangers to be applied later with associates and intimates. One exception to this is a T-group for couples. As reported by Golumbiewski (1973, p. 391), this group operates with much the same methodology except that the focus is more on interaction within each couple than it is simply on the interaction between random members of the group. Thus communication skills are learned and applied directly and immediately to the couple. There is less problem with transference of learning from the T-group to the "back home situation."

The Behavioral Skills Approach to Teaching Communication Skills

Often the goals of T-groups were heard in such terms as "increased awareness," "greater sensitivity," "a greater ability to perceive and learn," "more in touch with feelings," "taking more risks," "more open and honest," etc. The T-group jargon does have meaning to those who speak it, but it provides countless difficulties to those who try to measure its effects. Thus, as in therapy and education, there occurred some attempt to describe in more precise behavioral terms the specific skills which were being taught. What behaviors of a person can be observed that demonstrate that he/she has "increased awareness" or is "more in touch with feelings"? The idea was that once the particular behavioral components of a communication skill or process could be defined, attempts to teach that skill or process could be more accurately evaluated and modified.

Ivey, et al. (1968) clearly demonstrated how this could be done. They, in preparing a counselor training program, were able to take the Rogerian concepts of empathy and positive regard and turn them into concrete, observable skills--which they labeled "attending behavior," reflection of feeling, and summarization of feeling. "Attending behavior" was a skill composed of basically three distinct behaviors--eye contact with the client, a relaxed but attentive posture, and

verbally following or responding to the preceding comment of the client without introducing any new data. Once this breakdown of skills was accomplished, Ivey, et al. (1968) were able to develop a counselor training program that taught specific, measurable, behavioral skills--not just concepts. The idea of "communication skills" thus became more than rhetoric--they were identified and behaviorally defined.

How has the behavioral skills approach been applied to couples? In 1970 Guerney with Ely and Andronico trained couples in eight two-hour sessions to use Rogsonian Client-centered techniques. Couples were taught to adopt a "listener's role" to the spouse--to be empathetic and non-judgmental. They were taught to clarify the spouse's feelings, to express feelings directly, and to restate the spouse's verbalizations. Pre- and post-testing by Ely (1970) showed these couples to have significantly increased in their direct expression of feelings and in their clarification of feelings as compared to a matched control group.

Cardillo (1971) attempted to improve mutual understanding and individual self-concepts in disturbed marriages by teaching communications skills to them. Twenty couples from a mental health center were divided into two treatment groups. One group was given communications skills training. The other group was told only to try to understand their partners as they discussed issues. Pre- and post-measures plus an evaluation were used. Results showed significant

increases in agreement, understanding, mutual realization, and in spouse's self-concepts for both groups. The communications skills group increased more in Behavioral and Moral-Ethical Self-Concepts.

Hinkle and Moore (1970), as part of a preventative mental health effort, designed and implemented a seven-session student workshop to teach couples concepts and exercises for improving their interpersonal communication. They provided instruction in techniques for constructive fighting and expressing affection. As was true of most of the other communications skills approaches mentioned here, their focus was on the healthy parts of each person and his/her relationship. They emphasize that they are not dealing with behavior pathology at all and don't intend to. The results of their evaluation indicated that participants liked best the sessions on 1) the feedback model, 2) constructive fighting, and 3) non-verbal communication, in that order.

It is important to note that the work of Hinkle and Moore provided a basic outline and some content for the workshop which I eventually designed and carried out.

It is of equal importance to note that the "constructive fighting" instruction which Hinkle and Moore used was taken from earlier work by Bach and Weyden (1968). It was they in their book, The Intimate Enemy, who designed a "fight system" complete with a special language and scoring system. Thus

the remainder of the communications skills review will focus on efforts derived from their work.

The very idea of "fight skills training" is built on the belief that aggression is a necessary and important part of an intimate relationship. Handled properly, aggression strengthens bonds. The absence of aggression is absence of strength and life in the bond.

Thus Bach (1968) emphasizes the positive aspect of aggression. He sees it, as does Perls (1969), as a way of reaching out and making contact for growth and a way of masticating and integrating that which is taken in from the environment. If there is no contact, then we don't get enough from the environment for finishing gestalts. If there is swallowing whole without mastication, then we simply "introject" psychological food without ever integrating it.

Thus Fair Fight Training teaches couples how to use their own aggression more constructively. It distinguishes between hostile and impact aggression. Hostile aggression seeks to hurt, destroy, weaken its object. Impact aggression seeks to change the behavior of its object. Often the first, the reservoir of hostility--must be expressed before the way is clear to work together for change. Thus Bach's system provides a set of games or rituals (or skills) to facilitate both these processes.

Under the heading of Hostile Aggression Rituals appear such exercises as 1) Haircut (a time-limited tongue lashing),

2) Bataca Fighting (a harmless mutual physical hostility release), and 3) Virginia Woolf (a time-limited mutual insult exchange). Impact Aggression Rituals include 1) Fight for Change (structured stating of a gripe, listening, and negotiating for a change), 2) State of the Union Message (a detailed exploration of various aspects of the present marital relationship), and 3) Mind Reading (checking out assumptions regarding the spouse). There are also rituals for dealing with dimensions of intimacy such as power, trust, privacy vrs. closeness, and competition vrs. cooperation.

In order to increase benefit from the fights three techniques are taught: 1) Handicapping--the couple tries to equalize the physical or psychological fight so that it's fair and so that there isn't a winner or loser; 2) Beltlines--the psychologically sensitive areas of both partners are acknowledged and labeled as "foul" or off-bounds in the attack; 3) Leveling in Feedback--both people are asked to be open with positive and negative comments. They are asked to feed back content before replying to it.

The Bach Fair Fight Training system is lively, elaborate, and has been in practice for several years in California. Some, though not much, research has been done on its effects. Trompeter (1970) ran the first study to investigate Bach's contentions that 1) married couples could learn a technique of marital fighting and 2) that this would lead to greater satisfaction in the marriage. Four couples in the

experimental group were given 24 hours of training over five weeks. They were taught the fight techniques, and they had live fights within the group. Each couple was rated by the experimenter and by the other couples. There was a pre- and post-test and a control group. The results indicated that the couples learned the techniques but that they had trouble "putting it into practice." All the couples decreased in satisfaction with their marriage and in their efficiency at making decisions.

A considerably more encouraging study was done by Engel (1972). He, with his wife's help, took Bach's system and condensed the theory and techniques into a handbook of Fair Fight Training for use in the training workshops. They also used questionnaires and interview data to assess the effects of Fair Fight Training on people who had already been in the workshops. They got a population of 38 (33 usable) who had had Fair Fight Training for either five or ten weeks at the Institute for Group Process in San Francisco. The results of their data indicated that the "hawks" (fight-prone spouses) had become less "hawkish" and the "doves" (fight-phobic spouses) had become less "dovish" as a result of the training. Some spin-offs for some of the couples from the training were better relations with their kids, better listening patterns, and better relations with their business associates. These seemed to have resulted from 1) some desensitization to anger; 2) more careful and active hearing; 3)

recognition and avoidance of "dirty fighting" techniques; and 4) assertion training. It was also noted that the couples more successful in the training had 1) a core of goodwill towards each other; 2) at least a modicum of pleasurable times together; and 3) at least occasional good sex.

Thus the results of Engel seem to counter those of Trompetter. Perhaps there is a fuller truth that needs to be known of either or both of them.

Models for the Use of Video Tape Feedback with Couples

The final element to be added to the process of teaching communications skills to couples is the use of videotape. The recent development of less expensive and more portable equipment, has finally made videotape an available and potentially powerful tool for the communications facilitator. A significant amount of literature reviews its uses in therapy and in T-groups. The discussion here will be confined to its use with couples, especially as regards interpersonal communication.

Alger and Hogan (1965) reported their successful use of videotape in conjoint marital therapy. Their procedure was to tape the first ten minutes of the couple's therapy session and to replay it immediately. Either partner or the therapist could stop the playback at any time to comment on behaviors or on some apparent discrepancy between feelings visible on the screen and feelings felt. They found patient

reactions in three categories. 1) "Image impact" occurred as the immediate reaction on seeing the playback. (Those showing a marked reaction--either positive or negative--seemed to engage more fully in the therapeutic process and show more significant and rapid change.) 2) Remaining reactions occurred as patients paid attention to other aspects of the playback. They might notice the "multiple levels of messages" and even see contradictory messages from different levels. The couple then had a second chance to respond to other levels of communication which they might have missed the first time. Patients also tended to understand more and blame less. Sometimes associations to the past arose. 3) Finally there were post-session and over-all reactions to the video experience. Realization of an unknown pattern of communication might cause greater commitment to therapy. Dreams might occur relating to the video experience. The person might arrive at insight through his/her own observations, not by the direction of others.

Berger (1970) uses video feedback with families, groups, and individuals. He has observed that the video exposes patterns and systems of unconscious family arrangements. Typical patterns will appear such as placating, blaming, lecturing, changing the subject, withdrawing into silence and resignation, denial, discounting the message of the other, developing a psychosomatic ailment such as a headache. Sometimes realism even appears--being open and truthful and

really trying to work on conflicts while being congruent in communicating. These will be made obvious to the family viewing them.

Berger (1970) also has outlined some of the values and ways of using video with families to facilitate their communication with each other:

1. Viewing a "here and now" encounter can bring the family problems and distortions to focus much quicker and with much directness.
2. The therapist's own empathy for each family member can teach them how to see and empathize with each other.
3. They may face up more quickly to the contradictions and paradoxes in their family and learn to accept these.
4. They may see how they use communications to both conceal and reveal the truth. For example, fast talking or false smiles may conceal.
5. Neurotic claims--unrealistic expectations people have of each other--can be exposed and put into proper perspective.
6. A person's projections of her/his own feelings onto another may become evident.
7. Verbal and non-verbal contradictions can be spotted and clarified.

8. Patterns of collusion between members may be spotted and explored.
9. Typical Berne games or roles can be exposed.
10. When a particular reaction seems inappropriate to the person being reacted to, instances of transference may be highlighted.

Silk (1972) reports the successful use of video feedback in "brief" joint marital therapy. The couple are seen and videotaped individually for twenty-minute sessions. Then they are also seen in an initial joint videotaped session. In joint session #2 they review the tape of their first joint session. This usually exposes the facts that they don't listen very well to each other and are unable to see the other's point of view. In session #3 the therapist gives the couple a problem situation and tries to help them make contact with each other. He/she allows them a certain amount of time to come to a solution. They may also be asked to reverse roles to experience the feelings and attitudes of the other. This session is also taped and reviewed by the couple and the therapist. By the time of the fifth session, indications for the future of the relationship are much clearer. The therapist may let both partners view together their initial individual sessions, or he/she may re-evaluate and reform his/her approach.

An interesting variation to this approach is found in the work of Lederer (1973). His approach is to contract with

a family for six sessions. These sessions will be held at the family's house at dinnertime. Lederer will go in and videotape their interactions over dinner. Then he will show the tape immediately afterwards to the family, asking that each member look at her/himself carefully--to observe facial expressions, body motions, and speech patterns. Then he asks each person to evaluate objectively what kind of person she/he presented to the others. In the final session the first and last tapes are contrasted.

Lederer has been influenced by Norman Paul (1968). Paul believes that very few people have an objective consciousness-of-self. They don't know how their voice sounds to others, how they look to others, how their behavior affects others. Thus their own behavior--be it good or bad--is often misperceived by themselves. Lederer refers to "Paul's law"--when others experience us differently than we think they should, this usually makes us conclude that others are either hostile or not understanding. Thus the rationale for the use of videotape is to help us see ourselves as others see us.

H. F. Laquer (1972) also adds another twist to the use of video with couples. He uses two video cameras to record sessions with several families together. Then he plays it back to show them the effects their behaviors have on each other. Usually he edits the tapes before they are shown in order to focus on what is therapeutically significant. He also uses a split screen so that both sides of an interaction

can be shown. Thus in this model, Laquer has combined the use of video with couples (or families) in a group setting.

In two final models, there is more specific focus on the modification of communications skills alone for the couple. A study by Carter and Thomas (1973) concerned modifying problematic marital communication by Corrective Feedback and Instruction (CF-I). The experimenters inductively identified and measured communication targets for intervention. From this list, they developed a set of provisional verbal problem categories. The therapists held three sessions for each couple. In session one the couple were videotaped for twenty minutes while they discussed "our problems in marriage." In the second session, they were also taped while they discussed "our expectations of each other." Before session three, the tapes were assessed by the therapists according to the categories previously defined. The major communications defects were found and listed along with suggestions for improvements to be made. In session three, the couple discussed what they thought their communications problems were. Then they were given the CF-I--the results and recommendations from their tape reviews. They discussed their CF-I and got a chance to practice the suggestions.

The Carter and Thomas model is exceptional in that the couple apparently never view their own tapes. Instead they are given the feedback from the "experts" who have viewed the tapes. They are then instructed in the better ways to

communicate. Carter and Thomas do report that the two samples of twelve cases treated did produce successful modification of the components studied.

The model developed by Higgins, Ivey, and Uhlemann (1970) uses video feedback and modeling (and other means) to teach dyads the skill of "direct, mutual communication." The latter involves sharing personal feelings with each other and personal reactions to the other. This is a process of sharing, encounter, and feedback.

The study was set up with thirty dyads divided randomly into three treatment groups. Experimental group 1 (E_1) received the full training in "direct, mutual communication": a) a taped five-minute diagnostic conversation in which the couple talked to each other about their relationship; b) a programmed text in direct, mutual communication integrated with a modeling tape of listening and sharing in the "here-and-now"; c) a live demonstration of the skill by two supervisors; d) a viewing of their original tape to spot instances of the skill; e) a second five-minute tape in which the partners try to apply the skill; f) a review of the tape and time to practice the skill more; and g) the couple's demonstration of the skill in a third interaction.

E_2 had the same procedure except that no supervisor was present during the presentation of the programmed text and accompanying video materials and that no video feedback was given from earlier sessions. The comparison group (C)

received only material on interpersonal communication from a popular mental health text.

The data in the study showed E_1 dyads had consistent improvement in direct mutual communication in all three trials. E_2 increased in the second session only. C showed only slight improvement over three sessions. This proved that it is possible to teach direct mutual communication directly, and that of the three methods, media therapy (E_1 group training) was the most effective.

It is interesting to note also that self-report data in the study showed that all three groups felt that some change had occurred. There was possibly some placebo effect of couples simply being in a video room to talk about their relationship.

Summary

Several theories and concepts about communication in families were reviewed, especially those of Jackson (1965), Haley (1959), and Satir (1967). The methods of these family therapy communications theorists were found to be quite similar to those of the T-group theorists and trainers (Bradford, Gibb, and Benne, 1964; Schein, 1965; Golumbiewski, 1973). Certain communications skills are taught in both processes. Later these same skills appear more distinctly in the behavioral skills approaches. Ivey (1968, 1971, 1974), Hinkle and Moore (1971), Bach and Weyden (1970), and others were able to

isolate some of these skills and teach them as specific behaviors in training programs. With the accessibility of video tape, a new and promising dimension was added to working with couples. It was applied from traditional couples therapy (Berger, 1970; Silk, 1972) to specifically designed communications workshops (Higgins, Ivey, and Uhlemann, 1970).

This survey of the literature on teaching communication skills to couples has revealed that the above approaches have identified many of the same skills as essential ingredients of good communication. The skills are listed in summary form here:

1. checking out assumptions by paraphrasing the verbal content of the speaker's message, by summarizing the speaker's position, and by reflecting the speaker's feelings;
2. asking for clarification when the speaker's message is unclear;
3. being specific in describing the situation and people under discussion;
4. confining the discussion to the "here and now" as much as possible so as not to add the vagueness of the past or future;
5. stating one's own position--one's feelings, opinions, demands;
6. taking responsibility for what one is doing--similar

to above, stating what one has done, is doing, or will do; not blaming the other;

7. making one's verbal and non-verbal messages consistent; and
8. listening without interrupting.

To this list of skills taught by all of these approaches may be added three that come more particularly from certain approaches:

1. Solving problems by rationally evaluating consequences of alternatives. This derives more from the T-group and behavioral skills approaches.
2. Structuring interpersonal conflicts according to rules. This is seen in all approaches but is most completely defined in the behavioral skills approach of Bach and Weyden (1970).
3. Developing insight into interpersonal processes thru observation. This is seen most clearly in the media therapy approach which gives the communicator an immediate view of his/her communications and an opportunity for a more objective view of them.

Some of the techniques that are held in common by these approaches are listed here also:

1. modeling behaviors
2. focusing on communication process
3. instituting new communications rules
4. stopping "games"

5. supporting people in their communication attempts
6. structuring interpersonal communication situations
7. introducing theory
8. introducing new values
9. pointing out verbal and non-verbal inconsistencies
10. instruction in specific techniques
11. giving verbal or video feedback

The RBW, then, derives from these approaches and offers a combination of these elements in a new form.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This study was designed to evaluate a training workshop in relationship-building skills for couples. The workshop was conducted in eight sessions. Each session was two hours in length and met one evening a week for eight weeks. Learning experiences were designed for this eight-week program in the following areas:

trust building	mutual problem solving
meditation	conflict resolution
massage	developing intimacy
maintaining individuality	mutual creative
attending (active listening)	expression

This is an evaluation of the effects of the total workshop and, more specifically, of the CR (Conflict Resolution) component--its training methodology and its usefulness to each person in his/her couple relationship.

This chapter will describe the people in the workshop (the "sample") and the setting in which the workshop was conducted. An overview of the entire project will be presented. A rationale for this particular research design--which is known as action research (Lewin, 1947)--will also be included. Finally the chapter will be concluded with an explanation of the measuring instruments used and the ways the data was collected and analyzed.

Participants (The "Sample")

I had advertised in the Amherst area for couples who wanted to attend a free workshop in relationship-building. The ad appeared either as a classified notice or as a brief article or as both in the campus newspaper and in two area newspapers. Notices were also posted around the University and at local married student apartments. Announcements were sent to the campus radio station. I had given the dates and times of the workshop and the subject areas to be explored--"trust-building, meditation, massage, maintaining individuality, hearing and being heard, mutual problem solving, resolving conflicts, developing intimacy, sexuality, and mutual creative expression". The ad also noted that the workshop was being held under the auspices of the newly-formed Student Development Center. The names of both facilitators--Susan Wartman and David Andes--appeared on the advertising. (Appendix I)

Couples were accepted into the workshop on a first-come, first-serve basis with the following qualifications: 1) neither partner in the couple, in my clinical judgment could have any severe emotional disorders; 2) both partners had to agree to attend all the sessions, make the two private videotaped conflict simulations, fill out the weekly Marital Communications Inventory, and fill out the evaluations at the end of the workshop; and 3) priority for being in the

workshop was given to couples who were living together.

(Workshop application appears in Appendix Ib)

As it turned out only four couples were actually living together, so the next two couples in order of application were admitted to round out the workshop. Of the two couples who were not living together, one couple did live in adjoining rooms in a dormitory. The second couple saw each other during the week some and were usually together on the weekends.

No couple was rejected on the basis of emotional problems or unwillingness to provide data on their experiences related to the workshop.

All the participants were white and living in the Amherst area. Table 1 outlines other demographic data.

The workshop was designed as a developmental or preventative approach for functional couple relationships, rather than a remedial approach for dysfunctional ones. In general, then, the respondents were not in a relationship crisis or marital crisis of the nature that they would have gone to a marital counselor for if they had not come to this workshop. They all had discovered some problems in their relationships,

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ON COUPLES

Couple	Age	Education Completed	Religious Preference	Occupation	Length of Relationship	Children
A	woman 26	A.S. college	protestant	medical secretary	married 5 years	1
	man 26	B.A.	catholic	graduate student		
B	woman 19	1 year college	protestant	college student	dating 1 year	-
	man 19	1 year college	protestant	college student		
C	woman 27	B.A.	-	housewife	married 5 years	1
	man 27	3½ years college	-	college student		
D	woman 21	3½ years college	jewish	college student	dating 3 years	-
	man 20	3 years college	jewish	college student		
E	woman 20	2 years college	-	waitress	living together	-
	man 22	1 year college	-	college student		
F	woman 26	2 years graduate school	-	secretary	married 4½ years	-
	man 27	3½ years graduate school	-	student		

and they wanted to work on them in the workshop because the topics advertised seemed to cover some of their problem areas.¹

The trainers, Susan Wartman and I, were not part of the "sample," but we were sometimes participants. Some brief background data on us is appropriate here.

Susan and I were both married at the time of the workshop (though not to each other). I was separated. She was and is still coupled. She is in her late twenties. I am thirty. Neither of us has children. We both have background in human relations training and counseling skills. Susan has some additional experience in running an alternative school. I have additional experience in doing psychotherapy in mental health settings.

We knew each other first as neighbors and acquaintances in a small town. We had never trained together before, but I

¹The one exception to the "non-crisis" nature of this group was one married couple. The wife was in psychotherapy when the couple entered the workshop, and the couple did appear to have some serious difficulties in their relationship. (In fact, they officially entered marital counseling during the course of the workshop.) I realized that their participation in the workshop would present a research problem in that it would be difficult to separate the effects of the workshop from the effects of the therapy. Nevertheless, neither the wife nor the husband showed signs of severe emotional disturbance, and both were eager to try the workshop. Since they fit the prescribed criteria, it was decided to admit them. From their interview it seemed likely that the workshop would augment their therapy, and it was acceptable to me to include this possibility in evaluating the effects of the workshop on them.

did know something of Susan's experience and qualifications. When I was looking for an appropriate co-facilitator, I discovered that Susan was available and interested. She agreed to help me finish designing the workshop and to help me facilitate it and record observations of it.

Since I had conceived of the overall design of the workshop originally, I served as co-ordinator for the eight-week training program. Within the framework of the original design, however, Susan and I shared equally responsibilities for planning, implementing, and evaluating each session. In the sessions themselves we served as role models by sharing leadership and decision-making responsibilities with each other. We also modeled the communication skills formally and informally within the sessions. It was articulated to the participants, however, that the workshop was part of my dissertation--not Susan's--and that I would be doing most of the contact and follow-up procedures involved.

Setting

The training environment, unfortunately, kept shifting. We began our sessions in the Campus Center conference rooms at the University of Massachusetts. These were carpeted, cork-lined rooms with good lighting but no windows. Almost immediately we ran into problems here. We could not schedule the same room each week, we could not get big enough rooms to spread out in, we foresaw great inconvenience at transporting

the video equipment to and from the Campus Center. In addition to these bothers, one night the scheduling office even gave us a room in the basement with only three walls. The fourth was an open hallway--not very conducive to working on intimate relationships. We moved instead to meeting rooms in Berkshire House--a barracks-looking former dormitory which was in the process of being remodeled. At least here we were able to make use of two large rooms and one medium-sized room during our five weeks remaining. The rooms were somewhat bare but private and much more convenient for our use of video tape equipment (which was housed in the building). Because there were several rooms available for our use here, we could split the group into separate working spaces when necessary to allow each couple more time to work. We did this several times.

The private video-taped conflict simulations occurred also in Berkshire House in a room especially set up for the purpose. It was an office-sized room with a window, rug, chairs, wall pictures, a table, and an avocado plant. The video camera was set up at one end of the room with the cords feeding into the hall where the rest of the equipment was stationed. The tapings occurred at various times during the day or evening, and I, as the taper, was outside the room as the couple worked on their conflict.

Overview of the Project

1. Six couples were selected for the workshop.
2. October 23, 1973--THE WORKSHOP BEGAN. (A detailed description of each session appears in Appendix II.)
3. At the beginning of each session for the entire eight weeks, we asked each individual to fill out a Marital Communications Inventory (Appendix III). The purpose of this Inventory was to provide a weekly self-report on the communications patterns and conflict resolution processes of each couple.
4. After each session Susan and I recorded a log of activities and observations (Appendix II).
5. Session I: Introduction--group building and goal setting. In this session participants spent time interacting with each other in structured, "getting acquainted" games. The purpose of this activity was to begin to develop trust by the group members of each other. It was hoped that if trust continued to build throughout the workshop, participants might more freely give their feedback to each other when the need for that arose (Bradford, Gibb, and Benne, 1964).

The second half of this session was devoted to having each couple work out their mutual goals for their specific behavior changes as a result of this workshop. The intent here was to increase the likelihood that partners were striving towards the same goals, to encourage their setting

realizable goals of observable behaviors, and to enlist the support of the group members and the facilitators in helping the couple reach their goals.

6. Session II: Meditation and Massage. In this session, participants were taught some basic and simple forms of meditation and massage. The purpose of the meditation was to provide a form of relaxation and self-nurturance that would give each individual more strength and energy to bring to the couple interaction. The purpose of the massage was to provide a form of pleasant physical interaction with the partner--one possible method for strengthening relationship ties.

7. Between sessions II and III, before the beginning of the CR (conflict resolution) component, I videotaped each couple in a 20-minute session working on a simulated conflict situation. I taped the session in a private appointment apart from the other couples. I used the same conflict situation with each couple. Each partner was given a role to play and was told what the conflict situation was. I modeled the technique of role play to be sure each person understood what the term meant. I then told the couples that they had twenty minutes to work on the problem. They were not required or expected to achieve a solution, but if they did, that was also satisfactory. I asked them to use their own method of working on the conflict. When the instructions were clear to each person, I gave the partners a couple of minutes to look

over their roles and ask any final questions. Then I left the room and began the taping.

Conflict Resolution Component. The next four sessions constitute a battery of communication skills which will hereafter be referred to as CR (Conflict Resolution) skills. The original CR model was devised by Kraus and Nisenholtz (1971) for use in helping teachers and students work out their conflicts. The somewhat modified model as I used and taught it in this workshop appears in Appendix XI. Previous experience with trying to teach this model to couples had taught me that the idea of dealing with "conflict" could be anxiety-producing to some participants. Therefore, in this workshop we taught the CR skills as "communication" and "problem-solving" skills. Only in session 6 did we finally attempt to combine and reintroduce these skills as a model for working on conflicts.

8. Session III: CR Component #1--Defining and Stating a Position. In this session participants were asked to define some of their individuality or separateness by stating what they wanted or liked to do apart from their partners. Partner reactions to these statements were also shared. The purpose of this exercise was to establish the value of individuality within an intimate relationship and to teach participants the skill of Stating a Position through articulating some of their own individuality.

Stating a Position is actually a composite skill consisting of four sub-skills:

- a. Expressing feelings in the present. This requires that the speaker be constantly aware of his/her feelings during the interaction and express them to the partner. The assumption behind this is that blocked feelings lead to blocked or incomplete communication and thus probably to unresolved conflict. It is also usually more important that the speaker express his/her here-and-now feelings rather than past or future feelings. This is to keep the present conflict within manageable bounds and accurate memory.
- b. Being specific to the person and the situation. It is necessary that the speaker define specifically who and what he/she is talking about. General blasts of anger are not facilitative of conflict understanding or resolution.
- c. Staying on the subject. The speaker must sustain the direction of his/her concern or else the substance of the message may be lost. He/she must not be sidetracked or back down from his/her position simply to appease the partner. This would probably lead to unsatisfactory results in terms of resolving the conflict.

- d. Stating your requests or demands. It is not enough to express dissenting feelings. The speaker also has the responsibility of stating what he/she wants from the partner. This then gives the partner something concrete to respond to in the negotiations.

Stating a Position, then, means articulating feelings and wants about a specific situation. It is a first and necessary step in working on a conflict with another individual.

9. Session IV: CR Component #2--Attending to the Partner's Position. In this session participants were given further instruction and practice in Stating a Position. They were also introduced to the Attending (active listening) skills (Appendix VII). Each couple was given the chance to view their practice session on video tape and to get further feedback from other participants and the facilitators.

Attending behavior was first behaviorally defined and taught by Ivey, Normington, Miller, Morrill, and Haase (1968) to pre-practicum counseling students at a doctoral level. The skill, as they defined it then, consisted of three behaviors engaged in by a good listener:

- a. Maintaining eye contact with the speaker. This means that the listener looks at the speaker--not staring him/her in the eye, but maintaining a comfortable visual attention. Thus the listener hopefully communicates to the speaker, "you have my attention."

- b. Assuming a relaxed physical position. The idea here is that more attention may be given to the speaker if less of it goes to holding the body in a rigid or tight position. An "open" body posture communicates to the speaker a receptivity to his/her message. Nervous body movements are often distracting to the speaker.
- c. Verbal following of the speaker. The skill involved here is to respond to the speaker's communication without introducing any new or distracting subjects. The listener's comments will be directed to something the speaker has said. This communicates to the speaker, "I'm interested in what you're saying."

In addition to these original three skills, the term Attending behaviors is expanded here to include later Ivey descriptions (1971) of four other listener skills:

- d. Paraphrasing the speaker's verbal content. The listener uses her/his own words to relate what she/he understands of what the speaker has said. This gives the speaker an opportunity to correct any misunderstandings.
- e. Reflecting the speaker's feelings. Since feelings are often part of the message the speaker is conveying (and a very important part), the listener will tell the speaker what she/he understands of what the

speaker seems to be feeling. The speaker again has the opportunity to correct any misunderstandings.

- f. Asking for clarification. When the listener does not clearly understand something the speaker has said or implied, it is important that she/he ask the speaker to clarify it. This, too, will help avoid false assumptions and unnecessary misunderstandings.
- g. Summarizing the message. When the speaker has finished delivering her/his message, the listener may summarize what he/she believes the total message or position to be. The speaker may then make any necessary corrections.

The function of the seven Attending skills, then, is twofold: 1) to communicate to the speaker that he/she is being heard and 2) to insure that the message as understood by the listener is the message as intended by the speaker. The listener is saying to the speaker, "I am paying attention to you. This is what I hear you saying. Is this correct?"

10. Session V: CR Component #3--Mutual Problem Solving. In this session couples were instructed in the skills of working together to solve a mutual problem (Appendix IX). They were then asked to use these skills to work out together ways of implementing the mutual goals that they had set in session 1. Each couple was given the opportunity to view and critique a video tape of their attempts to practice the mutual problem

solving skills. Feedback was available also from other participants and facilitators.

Mutual Problem Solving, like the above two skills, is actually a composite of sub-skills or specific behaviors:

- a. Listing the alternatives. This is almost a brainstorming session. Both partners list whatever alternatives come to mind without evaluating or censoring them. The purpose of this practice is to allow more possibility for creative solutions.
- b. Evaluating the consequences of the alternatives. Now the partners must fully explore the implications of each alternative so that they can choose with awareness.
- c. Making a decision. It is easy to assume that a decision has been made when in fact it has not. The decision must be clearly stated.
- d. Checking for mutual satisfaction. In order for a decision to be good, it must have some satisfaction for both partners. One or both of them must take the responsibility for confirming that this is so.
- e. Summarizing the particulars of the decision. Decisions may be made and agreed to, but they may never be carried out if the specifics of the decision aren't clearly defined. That means one of the partners must summarize who is to do what and when.

Mutual Problem Solving, then, helps a couple pool their information and ideas in order to reach a decision that is mutually agreeable and likely to be implemented.

11. Session VI: CR Component #4--Conflict Resolution. In this final session on the CR skills, the skill grouping from the three previous sessions--Stating a Position, Attending, and Mutual Problem Solving--were all combined into the total Conflict Resolution Model (Appendix XI). After instruction in the use of this model, each couple practiced their CR skills by working on a small conflict of their own. They then had the opportunity to critique their own use of the skills and to get feedback from some other group members and a group facilitator.

The total Conflict Resolution Model, then, is a complex behavioral chain of sixteen different skills. Its intent is to provide a vehicle or guide to help couples fight constructively to a mutually satisfying end. Issues are articulated; feelings and wants are expressed. Communication is checked for accuracy of understanding. Once the couple is clear on where each stands, they negotiate to a resolution with some satisfaction for both of them. If there can be no immediate resolution, then at least their positions are clear, and they may want to take up their negotiations at some later time.

12. At the end of this CR component (between sessions VI and VII), I videotaped each couple in a second 20-minute private

session, working on a simulated conflict similar to the first in their pre-test tape. The only difference in their instructions this time was that I told them to employ the CR skills which they had learned during the course of the workshop.

13. Session VII: Intimacy. In this session participants were encouraged to practice their Attending skills again in sharing with their partners three things about their partners that keep them away and three things that draw them close. The idea here was to use the new communication skills and hopefully greater openness with each other in order that partners might know more of where they stand with each other in terms of the factors which encourage or inhibit intimacy. They were then asked to expand their openness a little by sharing some of what they had learned with another couple.

14. Session VIII: Mutual Creativity. Participants spent most of this session filling out evaluations of the workshop. However some time was used for couples to create together a collage of their relationship and to share this with others in the group. Food and drink were shared as the final act in our time together.

15. Four months later I again asked each person to fill out a Marital Communications Inventory and to give a second evaluation on the influence of the workshop on her/his life and communications with her/his partner (Appendix XIV).

Methodology

It is important at this point to describe more in detail the kind of research process which I have employed and to give some rationale for the appropriateness of this methodology to the problem studied. Probably the most descriptive label that can be given to this study is that of "action research"--a term made popular by Kurt Lewin (1947). The process starts with an idea or objective. 1) The actor/researcher looks at the objective in light of the means available to reach it. 2) Then the researcher does some fact-finding about the situation. 3) There emerges both an over-all plan toward the main objective and a decision about the first step of action. 4) Step one in the plan is executed. 4) A fact-finding follows which has four functions:

It should evaluate the action by showing whether what has been achieved is above or below expectation. It should serve as a basis for correctly planning the next step. It should serve as a basis for modifying the "overall plan." Finally it gives the planners a chance to learn, that is, to gather new general insight, for instance, regarding the strength and weakness of certain weapons or techniques of action. (Lewin, 1947, pp. 200-201)

Essentially, then, action research, as Lewin saw it, was "a spiral of steps, each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action, and fact-finding about the result of the

action." This occurs until the whole program has been planned, executed, and evaluated. This essentially was the program as Susan and I designed it. We began with the problem of helping couples improve their relationships. We created an overall design for a workshop centered primarily on communication techniques (including the CR component). After each session, however, we reviewed our perceptions and the feedback from the participants. In this review, we concentrated primarily on two questions: 1) Are the couples learning what was taught? 2) If so, why so? If not, why not? For answers to question #1 we looked at the couples' performances of the skills inside the sessions as rated by themselves and others on the video tapes or as observed by us. We also considered their self-reported uses of the skills outside the sessions. For question #2 we observed such behaviors as their response to homework assignments, their resistance to or cooperation with our instructions in the session, their sharing or withholding of their own feelings and ideas in a session, their punctuality or tardiness, and the nature of their relationships with us and with other couples in the group. We also asked them directly at the end of each session for feedback on some of the exercises, processes, and teaching methods we used. In the light of all this data, we then designed more specifically for the following week's session. Thus each session built upon the previous one and modified somewhat the overall design.

This process of action research, according to Ivey's advice to his dissertationing students, asks the questions "does it work?," "what am I doing right? wrong?," "what are some key dimensions of success?" (1973, p.2). These are vital questions for teachers, therapists, anyone making social interventions. They were vital for us as co-facilitators, trying to keep our design relevant and vital.

One other important point is that this use of action research helps bridge the gap between actor and evaluator, between practitioner and researcher. There are remarkable similarities here to Raush's description of the naturalist/clinician as participant observer: he is

an explorer in the realm of human events and an organizer of those events and their implications. Like other naturalists, he is an observer, and if his observations are to have scientific merit, he must be a disciplined observer. Yet he is not only an observer. . . he is also a participant in the events he chooses to study. The strategy of participant observation has its scientific risks, which training and discipline can reduce, though not completely eliminate. But this same strategy is also the source of the clinician's power as scientific investigator. . . The contact (between therapist and client) thus embodies a research collaboration, so to speak, in the service of the client's aims for change. (1969, pp. 124-125)

Evaluation in Action Research

Evaluation is the third step in Lewin's action research spiral. In fact, a more accurate term would be action evaluation instead of action research. Thus it is important to

take a closer look at what evaluation is, because it differs significantly from the traditional experimental research model.

McIntyre (1970) defines evaluation as "the basis for decision-making, and as such, includes both description and judgment and collection of pertinent data on which to base judgments" (p. 213).

Stake (1967) suggests that:

The purpose of educational evaluation is expository; to acquaint the audience with the workings of certain educators and their learners. It differs from educational research in its orientation to a specific program rather than to variables common to many programs. A full evaluation results in a story, supported perhaps by statistics and profiles. It tells what happened. It reveals perceptions and judgments that different groups and individuals hold--obtained, I hope, by objective means. It tells of merit and shortcoming. As a bonus, it may offer generalizations ("The moral of the story is . . .") for the guidance of subsequent educational programs. (p.5)

Evaluation, then, is an attempt to find the value of something--in this case, the value of the workshop and its CR training component. This value is used in making decisions about what is to follow--what changes in the workshop are to be made for the next session or for the next whole workshop.

McIntyre goes on to list other characteristics which differentiate evaluation from experimental research: 1) Evaluation isn't concerned with generality, since the effectiveness of the program being evaluated is usually specific to the particular setting. 2) Since other populations and

settings aren't considered, the validity measures are internal, not external. 3) There must be a complete description of the event studied. 4) Since evaluation can't control all the relevant parameters, it must describe them. 5) Instead of inferential statistics, more use is made of descriptive statistics, frequency counts, either-or tabulations, and chi square (1970, p. 215).

Action Evaluation vs. Experimental Research

There remains to be more fully answered the question of why action evaluation is the "treatment of choice" in this particular case. The following few paragraphs are addressed to this question.

A year ago I began the design of a workshop to teach couples CR skills. I planned carefully and tightly controlled all the variables I could. I tried to withhold my personality and influence from the teaching process so as to make the study replicable. I wanted to test, instruct, and re-test; then compare this with a control group. The results were a brief, uncomfortable workshop with minimum benefits for participants and myself. I had nothing of any value to compare with any group. Soon after, I discovered the process of action evaluation and realized the potential freedom for continuous creativity and design improvement. The process did not have to be replicable and the results could be openly evaluated both by myself and the

participants. I discovered what I was later to read in an article by Sommer:

. . . . Research cannot provide answers to questions of value. An evaluation model seems more appropriate to most social problems than a pure research model. . . . psychologists must develop criteria for evaluating program success based on the experiences of the people in the setting rather than looking at such experiences as instrumental to some remote productivity criterion such as mental health, school progress, or income. (1973, p. 127)

I also discovered that I share some of the humanistic research values implied or stated by Sommer (1973) and by Turner (1970). Put concisely, this means that I am committed to doing research (or evaluation) that in its very process is not only non-manipulative and non-exploitive but is also helpful and healthful to myself as the researcher and the subjects as participants. This contrast can be best portrayed by outlining Sommer's distinction (1973, pp. 127-133) between evaluation and research as it applies to my own work. My comments will appear in parentheses.

Evaluation

Research

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Deals with questions of value: addresses the social utility of action and research interventions. | Deals with questions of fact; may be abstract or theoretical. |
|--|---|

(My question is "once these couples have learned these CR skills, of what value are they to the couples?" "What was valuable in the workshop?" The research model would have so

constricted my data by its closed-ended questions that I would have had a very limited basis for judgment as to what was helpful to these couples.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>2. Deals with a specific concrete situation and the people in it.</p> | <p>Deals with immutable laws and relationships about abstract categories of individuals--old people, schizophrenics, etc.</p> |
|--|---|

(I was dealing with a particular group of people in a particular situation--student couples at the University of Massachusetts who had answered an ad to participate in a training workshop in relationship building. I value first my obligation to them and what I can learn of their experience. I do not try to make their experiences generalizable because I would have to erase some of its uniqueness for each individual. Thus to play the "fitting game," I would have to distort individual perception into group trends. The great value of the open-ended evaluation is that it allows each person to tell her/his story, without having to conform it to my categories.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <p>3. Usually requires less time.</p> | <p>Often takes so long as to impede necessary action.</p> |
|---------------------------------------|---|

(Timing was important in order to be able to design for the upcoming session and in order to provide participants with feedback from their own evaluations while it still would be helpful to them.)

4. Can deal with social problems more easily because it can include and describe many variables. Is effective only in dealing with isolatable data on a small scale. Must limit variables.

(This, as is mentioned above, was a very important factor in allowing me the freedom to create a complex training program. Because we did not have to C-O-N-T-R-O-L all the variables, we could modify the design even in the midst of the session itself. Controlling variables in this case would have amounted to controlling people--a fact which has been counter to the goal of making stronger, more responsible (self-controlling) people in this workshop.

5. Provides a feedback loop from clients or users to practitioners. This demystifies the activities of psychologists & institutions and creates a questioning community. Usually gives subjects in experiments very little (except a possible debriefing at the end as to the "real purposes" of the experiment).

(Feedback was essential to us for our weekly designing process. It also allowed participants to be more than just recipients of action. They could influence it with their feedback.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 6. Involves the evaluator
with others for their
benefit. | Can be exploitive towards
other people. Experimentor
should be detached and free
from social concerns and
values. |
|--|---|

(Susan and I were free to interact and get involved with people during the workshop for their benefit. We used our own personalities and facilitative skills wherever we could. We did not depend on the mechanics of a specified process alone. We did not use the inhuman mode of detachment to teach human contact skills.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 7. Seeks value in the immediate experience for itself. Doesn't have to lead to anything else. Is concerned with the quality of life. Can specify the most satisfying aspects of the situation and those needing improvement. | Looks at programs and experiments as instrumental to other things or ends. Diverts the attention away from the experience itself. |
|--|---|

(There is guaranteed valuable return here because it is a reporting on what has been of value. This was important not only to us for our designing but also to the participants, who, in sharing their own individual experiences, could again

affirm their own individuality--an important sub-theme of the workshop.)

There remain, on this subject of evaluation and research, a few words to be said about the absence of a control group--the traditional ingredient of experimental research. L. J. Cronbach (1964) states the case this way:

Since group comparisons give equivocal results, I believe that a formal study should be designed primarily to determine the post-course performance of a well-described group, with respect to many important objectives and side-effects. . . .

Ours is a problem like that of the engineer examining a new automobile. He can set himself the task of defining its performance characteristics and its dependability. It would be merely distracting to put his question in the form: "Is this car better or worse than the competing brand?" (p. 238)

Gluckstern (1973) in her own action research dissertation noted that

. . . the absence of a control group is usually considered a major limitation. However, if action research--with or without a control group--is to be considered acceptable, it must be valued for its major contribution: reality-based social research which can give insight and needed assistance to those in applied work by identifying practices which have been useful and practices which have been of little value. Such research can also function as a sifting mechanism to identify areas which need more detailed attention. (p. 77)

Both writers together sum-up a tenable position. The emphasis in this study is an exploratory and evaluative one. It focuses on the experiences of the participants both during and after the workshop with the aim of determining which experiences were valuable and which valueless to the

participants. And what were they valuable or valueless for? Such data can be used in designing the next couples workshop, as that is the way action research works. It can also be used in selecting parts of the workshop or parts of the CR training for more specific researching. At that point perhaps the use of a control group would be a logical step.

Instrumentation, Data Collection and Analysis

1. Marital Communications Inventory. This is a self-report instrument developed and tested by Millard J. Bienvenu, Sr. (1969). (Appendix III)

Validity: From its application to 172 married couples it was discovered that 45 of the 46-item Inventory discriminate (at the .01 level of confidence using the chi-square test) between the upper and lower quartiles of the experimental group. The remaining one question discriminates at the .05 level of confidence. Thirty-two of the 46 items in this Inventory show a discrimination of 20% or better between the upper and lower quartiles of the group studied with a first experimental inventory.

As cross validation for the items retained, the mean score of 105.78 earned by this experimental group was compared with scores earned by a comparable group of 60 subjects. The mean score of this latter group is 105.68 and supports cross-validation of the Inventory.

Further validity support also comes from a study of two groups of 23 subjects each. One group were receiving marital counseling through a Family Counseling Agency. The other were comparable to the first in terms of age, lengths of marriage, and education but exhibited no apparent marital problems. The Mann-Whitney U test found a significantly higher level of communication in the couples without marital problems than in those receiving counseling help.

Reliability: Using the Spearman-Brown formula a split half correlation coefficient, computed on scores of 60 respondents on the odd-numbered and on the even-numbered statements, revealed a coefficient of .93 after correction.

The Marital Communications Inventory was used in the present study as a time series instrument. That is to say, there were nine administrations of the Inventory--one at the beginning of each session over the eight-week period of the workshop and one at the follow-up four months after the workshop. This was to provide a periodic check on the level of communication occurring in each couple.

The Inventories were hand-scored from a scoring key, and the data, for comparison, was broken down into three categories for each participant. These categories distinguished communication patterns of: 1) the individual, 2) the partner, and 3) their mutual interactions. These raw scores were then converted into percentage scores by dividing the raw scores by the highest possible score for that category.

This made possible the comparison of a participant's scoring of his/her own communication patterns with the partner's scoring of those same patterns. These comparison percentage scores were then graphed together to highlight their relationship over the series of nine administrations.

A one-tailed t-test was applied to the MCI data to determine any significant changes in the communication scores for the women, the men, and their mutual interaction. The scores were taken from the nine MCI administrations over the eight weeks of the workshop plus the four-month follow-up.

The MCI data was also subjected to one-factor analyses of variance. These analyses examined the reported communication patterns of the six men, the six women, and their mutual interactions.

Table 2A indicates at what points during the course of the workshop the MCI and other instruments were employed.

TABLE 2 A

COUPLES' WORKSHOP: A CONTENT AND MEASUREMENT OUTLINE

Session Date	Subject Area of Session	Measurement Used
October 23 Session #1	Introduction: goal setting and group building	1. MCI before 2. Log after
October 30 Session #2	Getting in touch with self through meditation and with partner through massage	1. MCI before 2. Log after

TABLE 2 A--Continued

Session Date	Subject Area of Session	Measurement Used
October 31- November 5*	Individual couple sessions: pre-training measure	Video tape of a simulated con- flict situation
November 6 Session #3	CR component #1: Sepa- rateness--Defining and Stating a Position	1. MCI before 2. Log after
November 13 Session #4	CR component #2: Atten- ding to the partner's position	1. MCI before 2. Log after
November 20 Session #5	CR component #3: Mutual Problem Solving	1. MCI before 2. Log after
November 27 Session #6	CR components combined: Conflict Resolution model	1. MCI before 2. Log after
November 28- December 3*	Individual couple sessions: post-training measure	Second video tape of a simulated conflict situa- tion
December 4 Session #7	Intimacy: sexual and non-sexual	1. MCI before 2. Log after
December 11 Session #8	Workshop evaluation Creating together	1. MCI before 2. Workshop evaluations before 3. Log after
April 3- April 10*	Individual couple sessions: Four-month follow-up	1. Communica- tions Inventory 2. Follow-up workshop evalua- tion

*indicates individual sessions held with each couple sometime during the designated week.

2. Pre- and Post-Treatment Video Tapes of Simulated Conflicts. Between sessions 2 and 3 and between sessions 6 and 7, each couple was videotaped in private session working on a simulated conflict situation. The training in CR skills occurred in the sessions between these two tapings.

The same two conflict situations were used for each couple (Appendix XIII). I gave each partner a role to play and told them what the conflict situation was. I modeled the technique of role play to be sure each person understood what I meant by that term. I gave each couple twenty minutes to work on the problem. They were not required to come up with a solution, but if they did, that was fine. I asked them to use their own methods of working on the conflict. When it seemed clear what was being asked of each person, I gave the partners a couple of minutes to look over their roles and ask any final questions. Then I left the room and began the taping.

The video tapes were used as operant measurement tools to provide direct measures of the specified communications skills. The skills were defined in observable terms prior to the start of the measurement procedures. The initial measurement, taken from the videotape of the couple's first conflict simulation, provided a baseline for the couple. This determined if the desired behaviors (the prescribed communication skills) were in the couple's repertoire, and if so, at what level. The baseline data provided a description of the

frequency of occurrence of particular behaviors. This was of primary importance, since the effect of the experimental training was determined by a direct comparison to the couple's baseline.

Two trained raters determined the baseline by direct observation and simple behavior counts made from tape #1 (Appendix XVI). From tape #2 they made and charted new behavior counts. The behavior frequencies of tape #1 were then compared with those of tape #2 to see if, indeed, an increase had occurred in the desired behaviors. A one-tailed t-test was applied to this data to see if the couples' increases in their use of the CR skills were statistically significant.

The raters received eight hours of intensive training in discriminating prescribed behaviors. The raters received both oral and written descriptions of the behaviors taught in the CR model. They were then asked to use the CR model in their own simulation of three conflict situations. The conflict simulations were audiotaped, and each rater was asked to independently listen to and record the specified CR behaviors which she heard used in the tapes. Results of the raters were compared and discussed with the trainer after the rating of each tape. This was to achieve more mutual definition of the specified CR behaviors. Two additional conflict simulations (similar to those used by the workshop couples) were videotaped. One was rated and discussed by the

raters and the trainer, again to increase the degree of common understanding of the specified behaviors. The second was used as a test of the inter-rater reliability of the two raters. The Pearson product-moment correlation was used and the overall inter-rater reliability was computed at .998.

Broken down into the component skills rated, the correlations were computed as follows:

Stating feelings	.846
Leaving the subject	1.000
Specifying the situation	1.000
Presenting wants	1.000
Eye contact	.973
Interruptions	1.000
Paraphrasing	.844
Reflecting Feelings	.775
Asking for clarification	.901
Summarizing partner's position	1.000
Listing alternatives	1.000
Evaluating consequences	1.000
Making a decision	1.000
Checking mutual satisfaction	1.000
Summarizing decision particulars	1.000

Raters did their work in a video room with a screen between them. They handed in their rating sheets when they had finished the rating.

3. Written Participant Evaluations. This is another self-report instrument (Appendix XIV). It is an open-ended questionnaire designed to allow each participant as much freedom as possible to comment on his/her experience in the

workshop and its possible influence on his/her life. Participants were asked to be as complete and honest as possible in their evaluations. They wrote for approximately an hour during the last session of the workshop.

An abbreviated version of this same evaluation form was given each participant at the four-month follow-up interview with each couple (Appendix XV).

The great value of this method of data gathering is that it gives a much more complete and accurate picture of each person's experience and valuing of the workshop. It allows people to speak in their own words and to answer even unasked questions. Unique experiences, which may be all but invisible on multiple-choice questionnaires, are here given a chance to be noticed and valued. The chances of significant data are greater here because the criteria for their significance has not been pre-determined and limited.

The data from both the questionnaires has been coded, categorized, and summarized, and will be presented in the next chapter.

Raush (1969) affirms the legitimacy of reports of personal experiences: ". . . behavior, experiences, thoughts, and so forth, as they occur in actual life situations, are legitimate sources of data" (p. 134). This is based on the clinician's assumption that "we are all pretty much alike" rather than on Hume's assumption that we can know nothing of the mind of another (p. 134).

4. Facilitators' Log. For each session Susan and I were to make a set of notes about our observations of significant behaviors during the session. We would use the notes from one week, then, as guides in planning the session for the next week. We included in our observations seating arrangements of participants, their ways of relating to each other and to us and to others in the group, their responses to particular activities, their general demeanor, promptness, appearance, etc. Unfortunately, we have an incomplete log. Although we talked about these things each week, they did not always get written down. These impressions are important, however, in at least two ways. First, as I have already mentioned, they informed our design for the coming week. Although we did have a general outline of the workshop on paper, we did try to build appropriately one session's program upon our evaluations of the previous sessions. Thus we maintained the action evaluation rhythm of plan, implement, and evaluate.

The second function of the log came as I began to look at data from the previously mentioned instruments. The log provided a valuable perspective, another set of measurements, a check on the other data. It helped describe the context in which the other data made sense. However, the log is not a public document but is bound by confidentiality within the group. Thus observations from the log are not quoted as a body of data in this study. They are inserted from time to

time to aid in the clarification and interpretation of the results of this study. When necessary, identifying references are deleted or changed to protect the anonymity of the participants in the workshop. The names of the participants have been deleted for that same reason.

Summary

This is an evaluation of both the overall workshop in relationship-building skills in general and of the CR (Conflict Resolution) component in particular. An outline of both the content and the measurements of the workshop appears in Table 2A.

The six participating couples (the "sample") were all volunteers in response to local advertising for the workshop. They were all minimally screened to exclude any severe emotional problems and to give priority to couples living together.

The workshop was held in the evening at the University of Massachusetts.

Participants all went through two-hour relationship-building training sessions once a week for eight weeks. At the beginning of each week's session and in a four-month follow-up, all participants filled out Marital Communication Inventories to give a time series measure of communication quality with their partners. Susan and I also made weekly

observations of behaviors within the group to use as advising data for designing the following session.

The middle four weeks, the CR component, was given special attention in evaluation. Simulated conflict situations were videotaped privately of each couple before and after the CR training. Behavior counts of the CR skills were compared in the pre- and post-training tapes.

At the end of the workshop each participant spent an hour in written evaluation of the workshop and the CR training. They filled out an open-ended questionnaire covering as many aspects of the workshop as possible. An abbreviated form of this same questionnaire was used in the four-month follow-up (Appendices IX and X).

The design employed here is one of action research or action evaluation. It follows the pattern of planning, implementing, and evaluating in step after step throughout the whole workshop. The evaluating phase differs significantly from traditional research. It is used as a basis for decision making. It includes collection and description of pertinent data and judgments of value based on the data. It is much more descriptive of process than controlling of process. And it deals only with the specific program studied, not with generalizations to more abstract populations. Thus evaluation is appropriate to innovative endeavors such as action research fosters.

C H A P T E R I V

RESULTS

This chapter will examine and integrate both the quantitative and qualitative data which was collected to evaluate the Couples' Relationship-Building Workshop. The object of this evaluation--as is true of all action research--is to provide clearer guidelines to inform the design of similar workshops (Lewin, 1947).

The workshop extended over eight successive Tuesday evenings--October 23 to December 11, 1973. Data was collected before, during, and after training. The Marital Communications Inventory (MCI), video-taped conflict simulations, open-ended evaluations, and the facilitators' log of each session were the instruments used to measure the couples' communication. A follow-up evaluation was conducted four months after the end of the workshop in order to determine if the effects of the training had persisted until at least that time. According to Ivey (1973), follow-up is an essential ingredient of action research which is required to test out a hypothesis adequately. Table 2B gives a brief outline of the methods and times of data collection.

The question addressed in this chapter is: Did these individuals and/or couples change their communications over the period of this workshop and the four months following it?

TABLE 2B
COUPLES' WORKSHOP: A MEASUREMENT OUTLINE

Session Date	Measurement Used
October 23 Session #1	1. MCI before session 2. Facilitators' log after session
October 30 Session #2	1. MCI before session 2. Facilitators' log after session
October 31- November 5*	Video tapes filmed privately of each couple in a simulated conflict situation
November 6 Session #3	1. MCI before session 2. Facilitators' log after session
November 13 Session #4	1. MCI before session 2. Facilitators' log after session
November 20 Session #5	1. MCI before session 2. Facilitators' log after session
November 27 Session #6	1. MCI before session 2. Facilitators' log after session
November 28- December 3*	Second video tapes filmed privately of each couple in a simulated conflict situation
December 4 Session #7	1. MCI before session 2. Facilitators' log after session
December 11 Session #8	1. MCI before session 2. Workshop evaluations before session 3. Facilitators' log after session
April 3- April 10*	1. MCI first 2. Four-month follow-up evaluation

*indicates individual sessions held with each couple sometime during the designated week.

This chapter will begin with a description of the changes in each individual and each couple as they were measured by the MCI, the pre- and post-treatment video tapes, the self-evaluations, and the facilitators' log.

The data from the MCI and the video tapes are presented in two ways. In the first section the MCI and the video tape scores for each individual and each couple are given. The video scores are displayed in tables. The MCI scores are presented in three graphs for each couple. The graphs depict the man's communication, the woman's communication, and their mutual communication. The scores shown on the graphs are presented in percentages. Raw scores were converted to percentage scores in order to compare one person's rating of his/her communication with the partner's rating of the same communication.

The time span during which the CR training occurred is also delineated on the graphs, since we were particularly interested in the CR component of the workshop.

In the second section, the data from the MCI and the video tapes are subjected to t-tests and analyses of variance for the entire group of participants. The men's communication, the woman's communication, and their mutual communication are grouped and analyzed separately.

Couple A's Communication Patterns

The data from the MCI is presented in three divisions: the man's communication, the woman's communication, and their mutual communication. The graph of each division covers the eight weekly MCI administrations plus the follow-up administration four months later.

The pre- and post-treatment video tapes were analyzed by two trained, independent raters. Their overall inter-rater reliability as computed by the Pearson product-moment correlation was an r of .998.

Woman A's Communication: The graph of Woman A's communication (Figure 1) contains Man A's and Woman A's report of Woman A's communication over the course of the workshop and four months beyond. Before the treatment, Man A rated Woman A's communication at 30%; following the workshop, Man A rated Woman A at 38%; and four months later Man A rated Woman A at 59%.

Woman A rated herself at 26%, at 56%, and at 51% respectively.

Data from the pre- and post-training video tapes (Table 3) evidence a decrease for Woman A in Presenting Feelings from 6 to 2 times and a decrease in Evaluating Consequences of Alternatives from 1 (yes) to 0 (no).

The two increases which Woman A achieved in her second tape were in Asking for Clarification and in Eye Contact

time. The first count went from 0 to 4. The Eye Contact time rose from 300 to 321 seconds in the 9-minute comparison period. Both indicate improved Attending to the position of the partner. Thus there was an increase in two Attending skills, a decrease in one Problem-Solving skill, and a decrease in one Stating skill. There were no other changes.

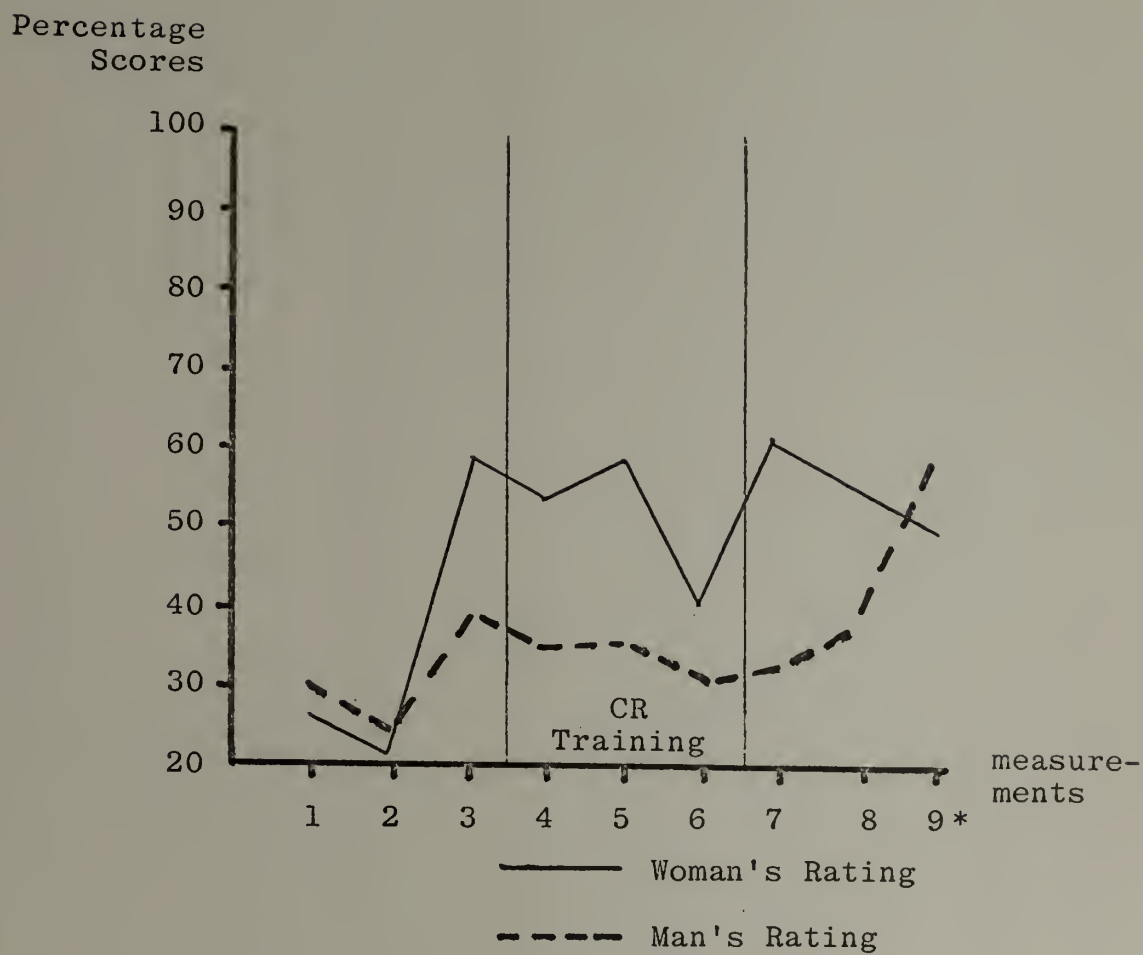
The workshop evaluations give another view of Woman A's communications patterns. In the post-treatment evaluation, Man A describes Woman A as "more confident and open in speaking her opinions about me." Man A's description in the four-month follow-up evaluation is similar: Woman A is "more relaxed and self-confident in talking with me and others."

In Woman A's post-treatment evaluation, Woman A sees herself as having a greater need to be independent and to express herself more fully. In the four-month follow-up evaluation, Woman A asserts that she is "more independent" and "more aware of my feelings."

The facilitators' log indicates that over the duration of the workshop Woman A seemed to evidence more assertive behavior by stating more of her opinions and feelings to her husband and others in the group. The facilitators also noted that there seemed to be some relaxation in her tight, perhaps "pained" facial expression.

Summary: The MCI graph shows that Woman A's communication increased over the period of time during which the workshop was conducted and remained at an increased level for

FIGURE 1
RATINGS OF WOMAN A'S COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

TABLE 3

VIDEO TAPE SCORING: BEHAVIORAL COUNTS

COUPLE A

Pre-treatment tape (T-1) = 1030"

Post-treatment tape (T-2) = 569"

Stating Skills	Woman		Man		Totals	
	T-1	T-2	T-1	T-2	T-1	T-2
1. Presenting Feelings*	6	2	3	2	9	4
2. Leaving Subject* (scored as minuses)	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. Specifying the Situation	1	1	1	1	2	2
4. Presenting Wants	1	1	1	1	2	2
Attending Skills						
5. Interruptions* (scored as minuses)	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Paraphrasing Verbal Content	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Reflecting Feelings*	0	0	1	1	1	1
8. Asking for Clarification*	0	4	1	2	1	6
9. Summarizing the Partner's Position	0	0	0	0	0	0
Problem-Solving Skills						
10. Listing Alternatives	1	1	1	1	2	2
11. Evaluating Conse- quences of Each	1	0	1	0	2	0
12. Making a Decision	1	1	1	1	2	2
13. Checking for Mutual Satisfaction	0	0	0	0	0	0
14. Summarizing Decision Particulars	0	0	0	0	0	0
	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total Scores	11	10	10	9	21	19
15. Eye Contact Time* (in seconds)**	300	321	442	274	742	595

*denotes counts taken from the first nine minutes of the tapes; others are from the total tapes.

**denotes the separate scoring of the Eye Contact Time, because the count is not in behaviors but in seconds.

four months afterwards. The video tapes indicate no overall improvement in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Couple A stated that Woman A had increased in her ability to speak her position (more assertively) and to attend to Man A's communication. The facilitator's log indicates some increase in Woman A's assertiveness and facial relaxation.

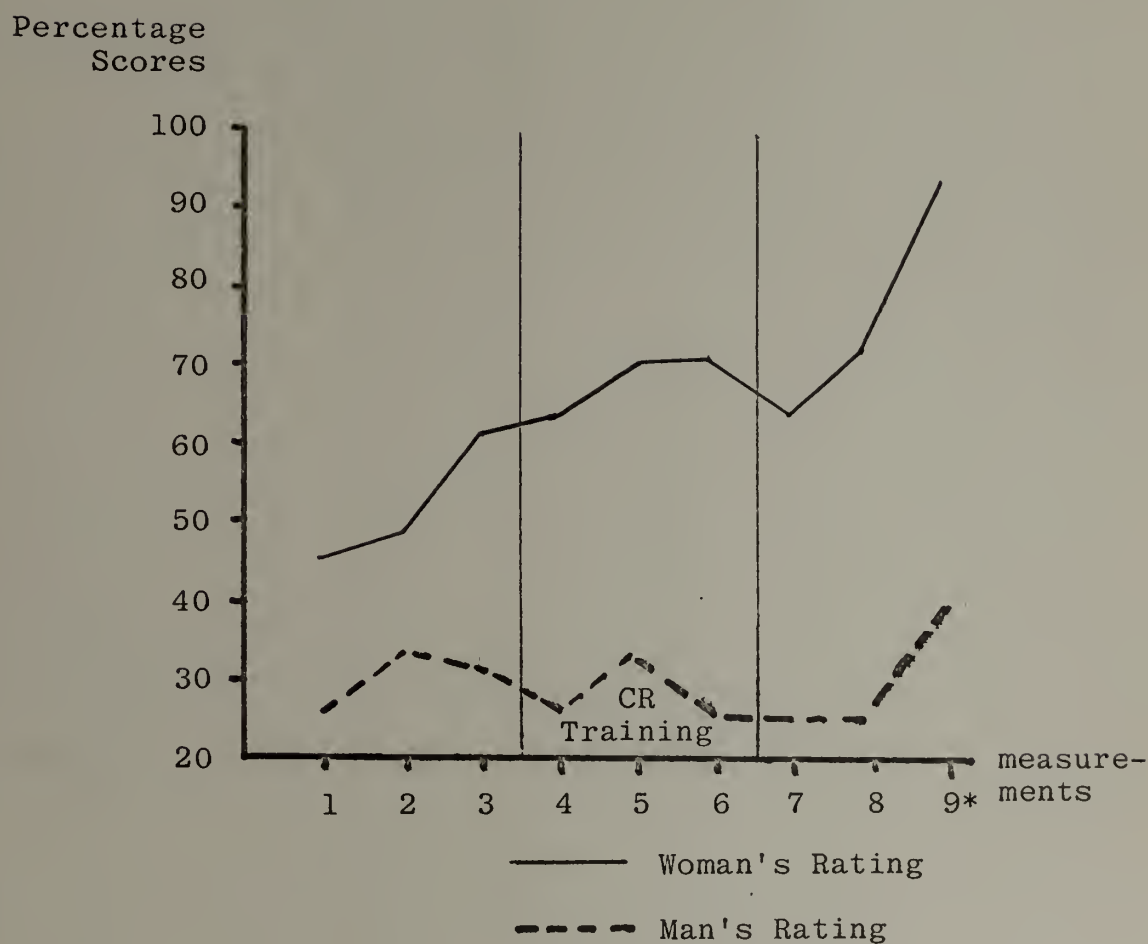
Man A's Communication: According to the graph of Man A's communication patterns (Figure 2), both Woman A and Man A report that Man A's communications improved. Woman A's rating of Man A increased from 45% pre-treatment, to 73% following the workshop, to 88% four months later.

Man A rated himself at 26%, again at 26%, and at 39%.

On the pre- and post-treatment video tapes (Table 3), Man A evidences a decrease in Presenting Feelings from 3 to 2, a decrease in Evaluating Consequences from 1 (yes) to 0 (no), and a decrease in Eye Contact time from 442 to 274 seconds. The only increase shown is in Asking for Clarification--from 1 to 2. Thus there is shown an increase in one Attending Behavior and a decrease in another, a decrease in a Problem Solving behavior, and a decrease in a Stating behavior.

In the post-treatment evaluation, Woman A describes her partner as "more aware of my need to be outspoken." She also notes that his communication is better because of the CR

FIGURE 2
RATINGS OF MAN A'S COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



*Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

training. In the four-month follow-up evaluation, she adds that "he listens more to what I say and takes my feelings more seriously."

Man A describes himself in the post-treatment evaluation as "less arrogant," because the video tape exposed his "bullying" of Woman A. In the four-month follow-up evaluation, Man A mentions that he sees himself differently now, that he takes himself less seriously, and that he tries to be more objective and less devious. "I've seen the image I project to others," he says.

The facilitators' log indicates that Man A did seem to restrain his partner-dominating behaviors, especially after the video tape feedback. Another trend noted was Man A's inconsistent behavior--sometimes being deeply and enthusiastically involved and sometimes withdrawing into minimal participation.

Summary: On the MCI graph Woman A reports that Man A's communication has increased over the course of the workshop and has remained at an increased level for four months afterwards. Man A's rating of his own communication shows no consistent increase except in the four-month period following the workshop. The video tapes indicate no overall improvement in Man A's communication. Couple A state that Man A has increased in his ability to be less dominating and more attending to Woman A's messages. The facilitators' log noted

some decrease in Man A's partner-dominating behaviors. It also noted a pattern of inconsistency in Man A's participation.

Couple A's Mutual Communication: The graph of Couple A's mutual communication pattern as measured by the MCI (Figure 3) shows an increase in their communication. Woman A's rating of their mutual communication was a pre-treatment score of 58%, a post-treatment score of 88%, and a score four months after treatment of 76%

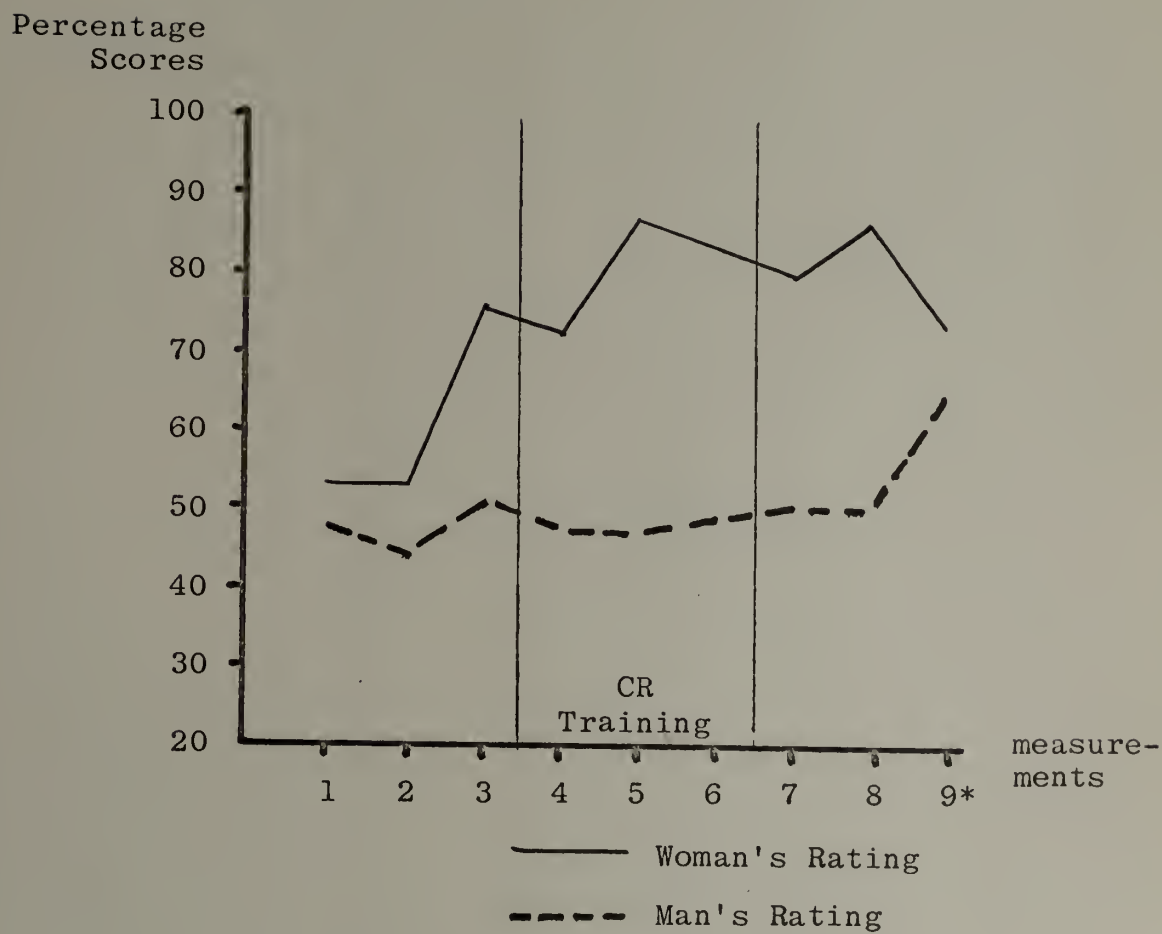
Man A's rating of their mutual communication was 48%, 52%, and 66% respectively.

Their combined video scores were 21 at pre-treatment and 19 at post-treatment. Their combined Eye Contact time was 742 at pre-treatment and 595 at post-treatment.

Other indications of their mutual communication changes are found in their workshop evaluations. In the post-treatment evaluation, Woman A relates that they "communicate more openly and directly" and that they are "more in touch with their feelings and express them constructively." In the four-month follow-up evaluation Woman A says that their communication is "more open and serious. We discuss important issues in our marriage." She adds that they have discovered more about their true feelings.

Man A in his post-treatment evaluation says that they have learned to discuss problems logically and rationally.

FIGURE 3
RATINGS OF COUPLE A'S COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

He makes no additional comments in the four-month follow-up evaluation.

The facilitators' log provides no comment on this couple's stated changes in their mutual communication.

Summary: The MCI graph shows that Couple A's mutual communication increased over the period of time during which the workshop was conducted and remained at an increased level for four months afterwards. The video tapes indicate no overall improvement in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Couple A characterized their communications as being more open, direct, and serious and themselves as knowing and expressing feelings more constructively and as discussing more rationally and logically.

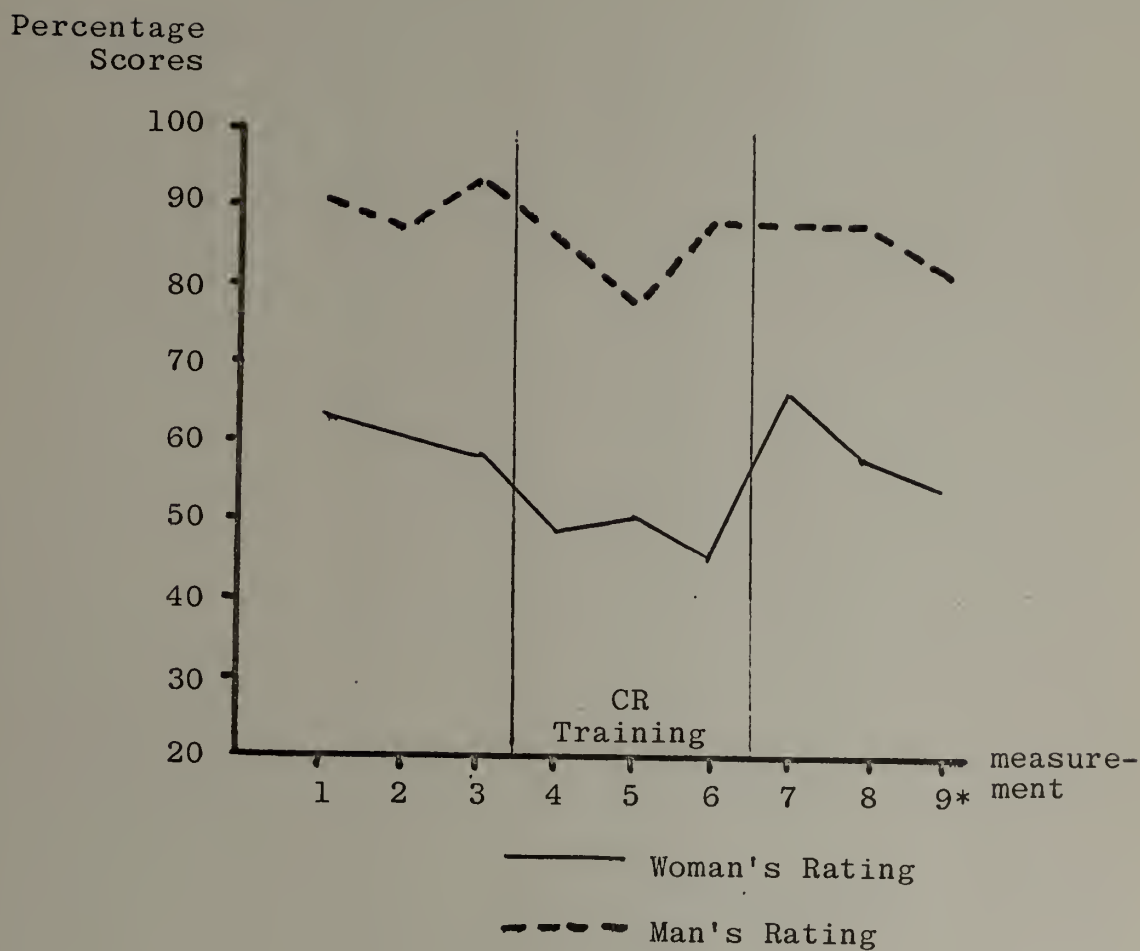
Couple B's Communication Patterns

Woman B's Communication: The MCI graph (Figure 4) shows that both Woman B and Man B see a decline in her communication efforts. Man B rates Woman B 92% at pre-treatment, 89% at post-treatment and 83% at four months past post-treatment.

Woman B rated herself at 64%, 59% and 56%, respectively.

Data from the pre- and post-treatment video tapes (Table 4) show that Woman B scored a large increase in Presenting Feelings from 1 to 8, and another increase in her Reflection of Feelings from 0 to 1. She showed a decrease from 1 to 0 in Asking for clarification and the same decrease in Evaluating Consequences and in Making a Decision. In addition,

FIGURE 4
RATINGS OF WOMAN B's COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

TABLE 4

VIDEO TAPE SCORING: BEHAVIORAL COUNTS

COUPLE B

Pre-treatment tape (T-1) = 1106"

Post-treatment tape (T-2) = 752"

Stating Skills	Woman		Man		Totals	
	T-1	T-2	T-1	T-2	T-1	T-2
1. Presenting Feelings*	1	8	2	4	3	12
2. Leaving Subject* (scored as minuses)	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. Specifying the Situation	1	1	1	0	2	1
4. Presenting Wants	1	1	1	1	2	2
Attending Skills						
5. Interruptions* (scored as minuses)	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Paraphrasing Verbal Content	0	0	0	1	0	1
7. Reflecting Feelings*	0	1	0	0	0	1
8. Asking for Clarification*	1	0	1	3	2	3
9. Summarizing the Partner's Position	0	0	0	0	0	0
Problem-Solving Skills						
10. Listing Alternatives	1	1	1	1	2	2
11. Evaluating Conse- quences of Each	1	0	1	0	2	0
12. Making a Decision	1	0	1	0	2	0
13. Checking for Mutual Satisfaction	0	0	0	0	0	0
14. Summarizing Decision Particulars	0	0	0	0	0	0
	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Scores	7	12	8	10	15	22
15. Eye Contact Time* (in seconds)**	440	413	460	505	900	918

*denotes counts taken from the first nine minutes of the tapes; others are from the total tapes.

**denotes the separate scoring of the Eye Contact Time, because the count is not in behaviors but in seconds.

Woman B's Eye Contact time decreased from 430 to 413 seconds. Thus, two Problem-Solving skills and two Attending skills showed weakness.

In the post-treatment evaluation, Man B describes Woman B's change as being more understanding, more open to accepting the "facts" of their relationship. In the four-month follow-up, he suggests that she has a greater awareness of their roles--both stereotyped and expected--and of the ways in which he fails to be open, honest, and growth-encouraging of her.

In her post-treatment comments, Woman B describes herself as more readily stating feelings and ideas and more expecting that Man B will listen. She also mentions that she is more confident in Problem-Solving and that she tries to attend better--especially with Eye Contact. In the four-month evaluation, Woman B asserts that she makes "a better attempt at sharing my feelings, rather than inhibiting them to avoid hurting him." She also comments that she better understands where she stands in her partner's time and scheduling priorities.

The facilitators' log confirms that Woman B's desire to be more assertive and less of a "tag-along" surfaced early in the workshop and ran as a theme for her during the course of the workshop. Woman B also seemed to try out more assertive behaviors by speaking her position more during the workshop and holding onto her partner less.

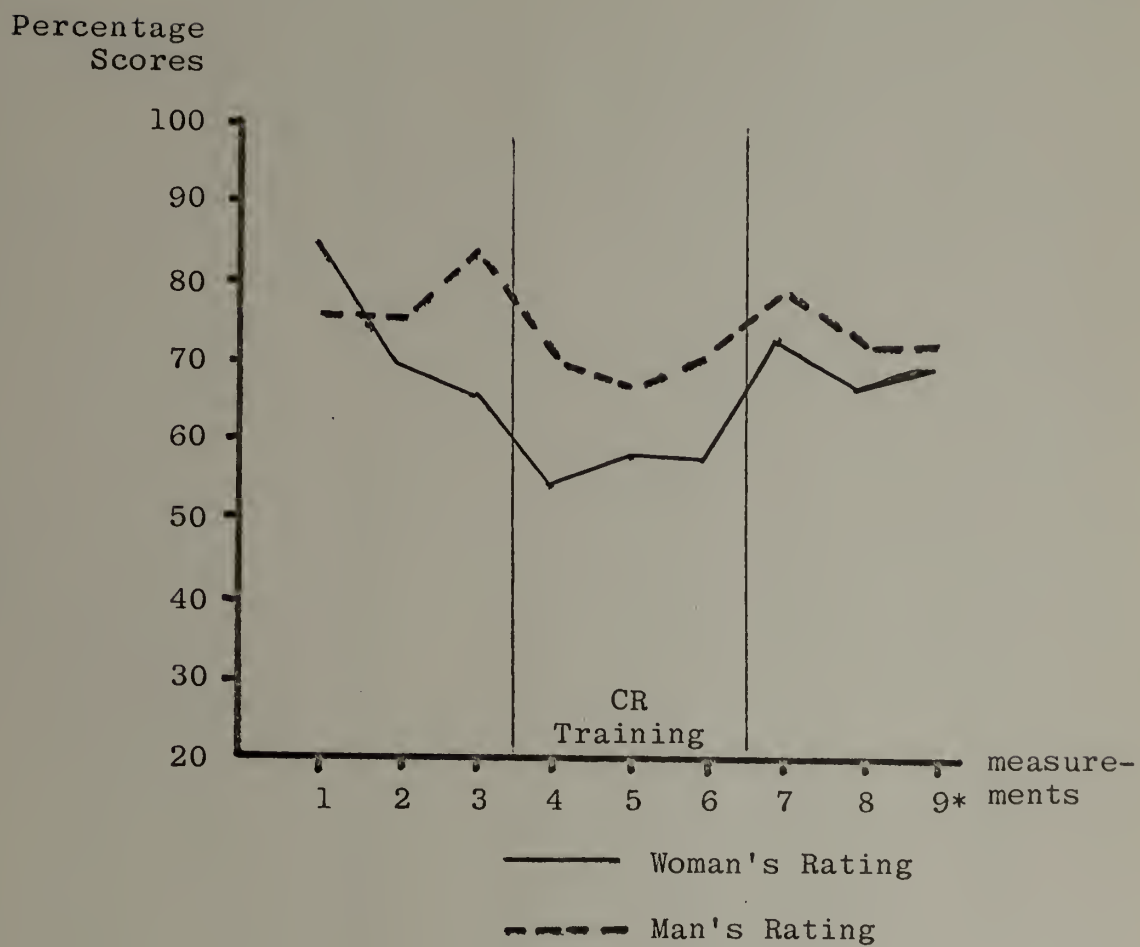
Summary: The MCI graph indicates no overall improvement in Woman B's scores over the course of the workshop and during the four following months. There is one sharp increase in her scoring of her own communication between session #6 and session #7. Woman B does evidence an overall increase in the scoring on the video tapes, primarily because of large increase in Presenting Feelings. She does show decreases in two Problem-Solving skills and two Attending skills. Man B describes Woman B as being more understanding of their relationship and more aware of their roles. Woman B describes herself as more assertive in stating her feelings and ideas. She also mentions that she is more confident in Problem-Solving and Attending, especially Eye Contact. She, too, feels she understands their relationship better. The facilitators' log indicates that Woman B did increase her assertive behaviors over the course of the workshop.

Man B's Communication: According to the graph of Man B's communication patterns (Figure 5), both Man B and Woman B report a decline in his efforts. She rates him 85% at pre-treatment, 68% at post-treatment and 70% at four months past post-treatment.

He rates himself 77%, 74% and 74%, respectively.

The video tape data (Table 4) shows that Man B increased in Presenting Feelings from 2 to 4 and in Eye Contact time from 460 to 505 seconds. He also increased in Paraphrasing Verbal Content from 0 to 1 and in Asking for Clarification

FIGURE 5
RATINGS OF MAN B'S COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

from 1 to 3. This represents an obvious increase in Attending skills and some increase in a Stating skill. Man B showed weakness, however, in Specifying the Situation, Evaluating Consequences, and Making a Decision.

In her post-treatment evaluation, Woman B states that Man B "tries more to listen and understand me instead of monopolizing." She re-affirms this in her four-month follow-up where she describes him as more "patient and not interrupting till I finish my sentence and thought."

Man B describes himself in post-treatment evaluation as "more considerate, understanding, tolerant." He adds that he has achieved "clarification of our problems" and that he is much more able to hear his partner. In the four-month follow-up evaluation, he continues his theme, describing himself as "more compromising, flexible, accommodating." He sees his partner's growth as not so threatening now, but as more "necessary, great, exciting."

Notes from the facilitators' log indicate that Man B experienced some stress in becoming aware of his domination of Woman B. He resisted viewing his video interactions, and seemed threatened by assertive behaviors of women in the group, in that he either avoided or attacked the women. He questioned and resisted certain communication exercises in the workshop.

Summary: The MCI graph shows no overall improvement in Man B's communication during the course of the workshop. The

video tapes do indicate some improvement, particularly in Attending and Stating skills. Both Woman B and Man B see Man B as better in Attending skills. Man B sees himself also as more receptive to Woman A's demands. The facilitators' log indicates that Man B did undergo some stress in confronting his pattern of dominance over Woman B.

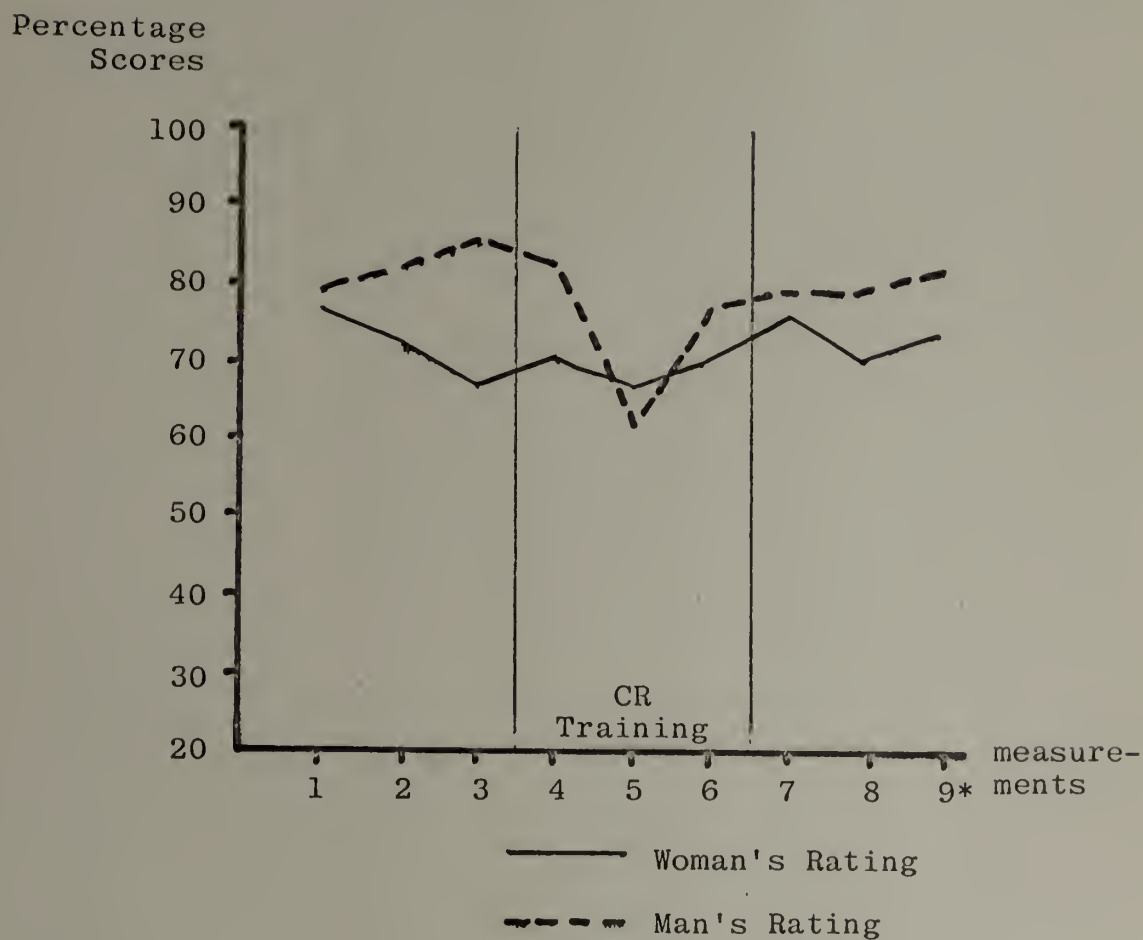
Couple B's Mutual Communication: As the graph in Figure 6 indicates, Couple B is mixed in their rating of mutual communication. Woman B rates their communications 76% at pre-treatment, 70% at post-treatment and 73% four months later. Man B rates their communications 79%, 79% and 82% respectively.

According to pre- and post-treatment video tape data, Couple B increased their communication behaviors. Their mutual score rose from a pre-treatment 15 to a post-treatment 22 and their Eye Contact time rose slightly from 900 to 918.

In her post-treatment evaluation, Woman B says that they "discuss problems on a more elevated level," that they "listen and understand better," that they solve problems better, and that they are more conscious of and sensitive to each other's feelings. She makes no additional comment in her four-month follow-up. Man B states in his post-treatment evaluation: "we both tackle problems, not just me" and adds that they use "sound principles of method problem-solving."

The facilitators' log mentions that on one occasion Couple B did bring out some of their feelings with one another

FIGURE 6
RATINGS OF COUPLE B's COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

regarding their mutual use of time. No further comment is made on their problem-solving abilities.

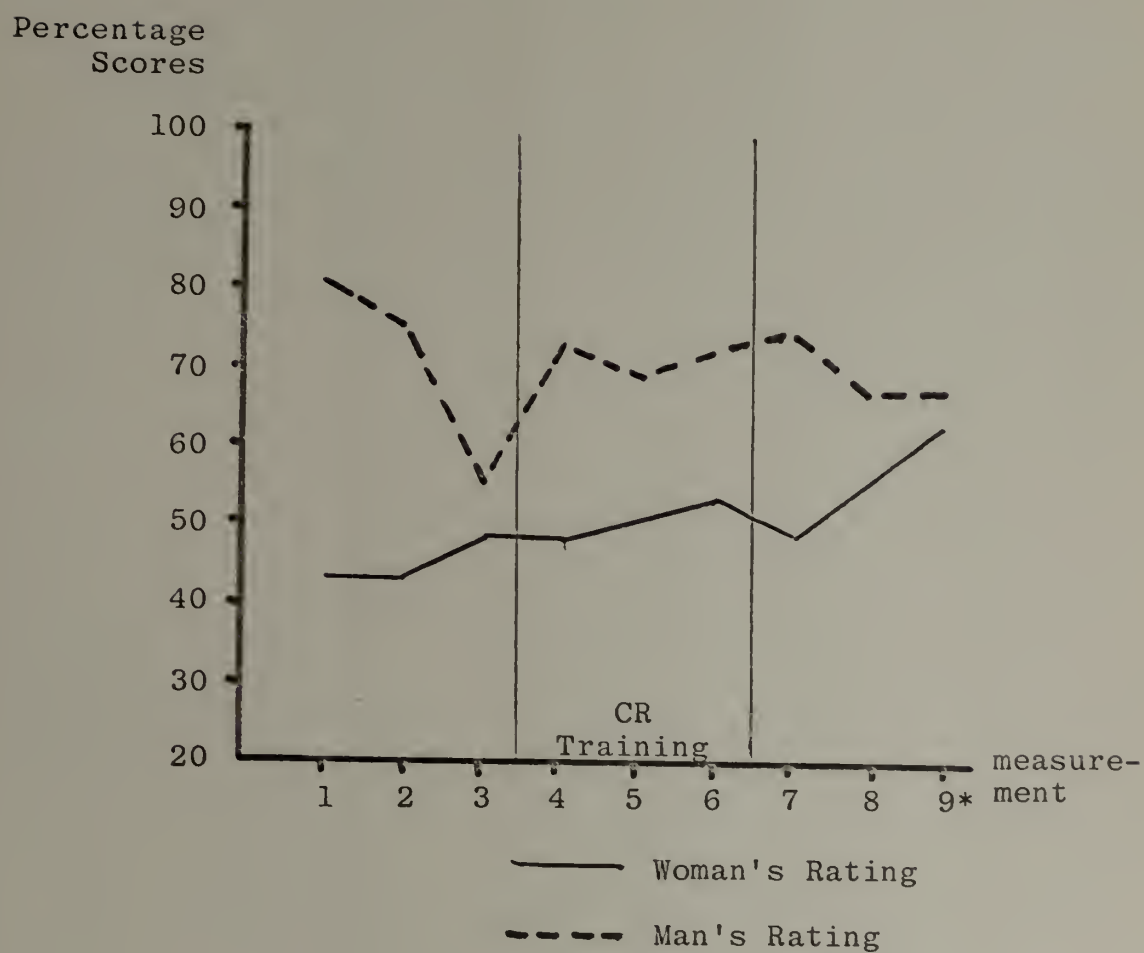
Summary: The MCI graph indicates no overall improvement in Couple B's Mutual Communication over the course of the workshop and four months beyond. The video tapes do indicate overall increase in use of the CR skills--especially the Stating and Attending skills. Couple B stated that they felt they were much better at problem solving skills. Woman B felt that their Attending skills were better also. The facilitators' log indicates that they did, upon one occasion, demonstrate problem-solving abilities.

Couple C's Communication Patterns

Woman C's Communication: The graph of Woman C's communication (Figure 7) shows that she rates herself 44% at pre-treatment, 56% at post-treatment and 64% at four-month follow-up. Man C rates her communication 82%, 68% and 68%, respectively.

Data from the video tapes (Table 5) show that Woman C increased Eye Contact from 432 to 449 seconds and increased Reflecting Feelings from 0 to 1. She also increased in Listing Alternatives from 0 (no) to 1 (yes). She showed a decrease in Presenting Feelings from 5 to 3 and a decrease in Asking for Clarification from 2 to 0. Thus, two Attending skills increased, while a third decreased. One Stating skill decreased and one Problem-Solving skill increased.

FIGURE 7
RATINGS OF WOMAN C's COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

TABLE 5

VIDEO TAPE SCORING: BEHAVIORAL COUNTS

COUPLE C

Pre-treatment tape (T-1) = 875"

Post-treatment tape (T-2) = 574"

Stating Skills	Woman		Man		Totals	
	T-1	T-2	T-1	T-2	T-1	T-2
1. Presenting Feelings*	5	3	3	3	8	6
2. Leaving Subject* (scored as minuses)	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. Specifying the Situation	1	1	1	1	2	2
4. Presenting Wants	1	0	1	1	2	1
Attending Skills						
5. Interruptions* (scored as minuses)	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Paraphrasing Verbal Content	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Reflecting Feelings*	0	1	0	1	0	2
8. Asking for Clarification*	2	0	2	1	4	1
9. Summarizing the Partner's Position	0	0	0	0	0	0
Problem-Solving Skills						
10. Listing Alternatives	0	1	1	1	1	2
11. Evaluating Conse- quences of Each	0	0	1	0	1	0
12. Making a Decision	1	1	1	1	2	2
13. Checking for Mutual Satisfaction	0	0	0	0	0	0
14. Summarizing Decision Particulars	0	0	0	0	0	0
	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Scores	10	7	10	9	20	16
15. Eye Contact Time* (in seconds)**	432	449	228	431	660	880

*denotes counts taken from the first nine minutes of the tapes; others are from the total tapes.

**denotes the separate scoring of the Eye Contact Time, because the count is not in behaviors but in seconds.

In post-treatment evaluation Man C evaluates Woman C as "more of an individual--more assertive, self-confident, helpful, receptive." In the four-month evaluation, he states that they have a "broader communication base" in their relationship.

In her post-treatment evaluation, Woman C says she finds changes only in her mind. The changes she would like to see in their communications, she says, have not yet occurred. In the four-month follow-up she notes that she now tries "to look better all the time--not just for company." She also reports that she initiated a confrontation with her partner over some of her demands and that this noticeably reduced tension in their communications.

The facilitators' log indicates that Couple C had some difficulty examining their relationship. They refused to do one of the in-session video tapes because they couldn't agree on what to talk about. Man C did most of the talking and deciding in their relationship, and Woman C seemed to have trouble expressing her demands of him.

Summary: According to the MCI graph of Woman C's communication, Man C does not see any improvement in Woman C's communication. Woman C does record some improvement in her own communication. The video tapes show no overall increase in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Man C reports that Woman C has become both more assertive and more attentive. Woman C says that she was able to

initiate a confrontation with Man C. She also reports that she tries to appear more attractive now. The facilitators' log reports that Couple C had difficulty in working on their relationship, and that Man C seemed to dominate most of their interactions.

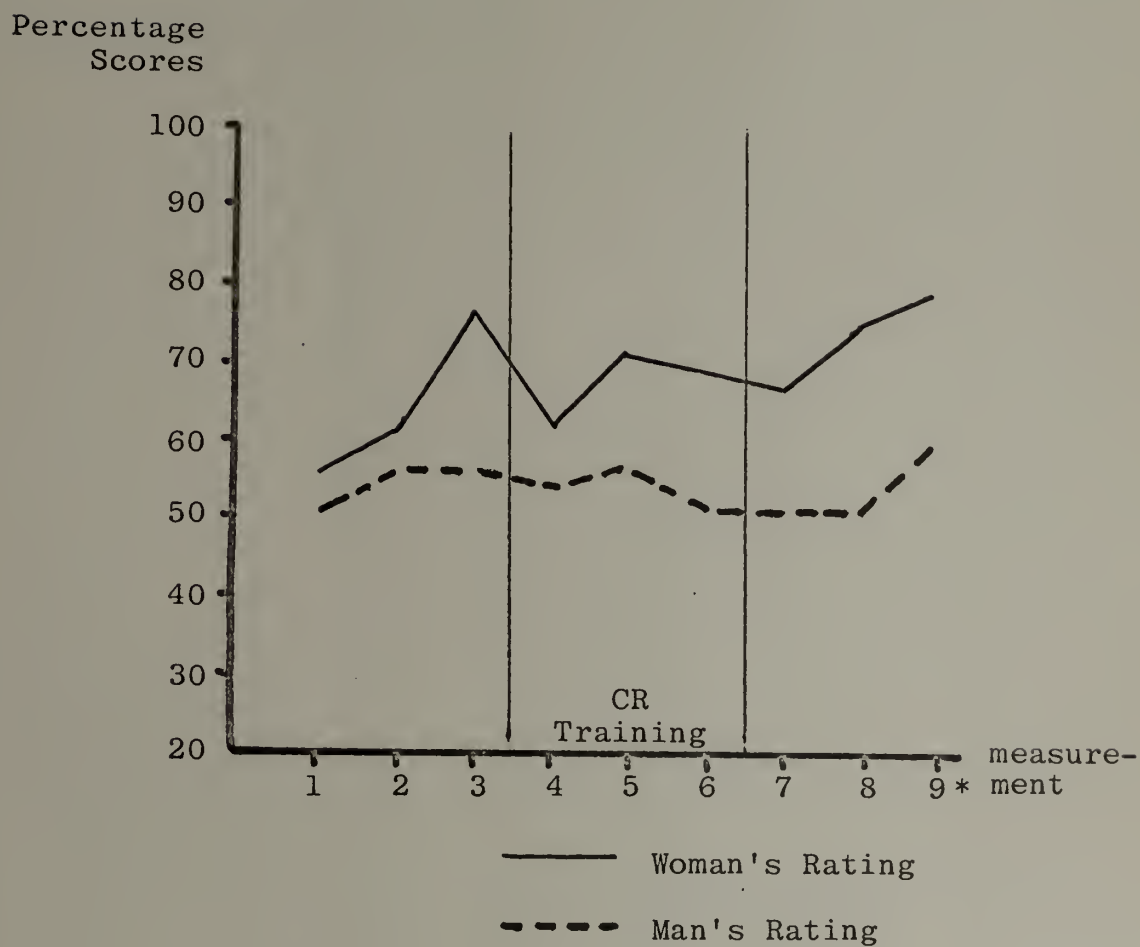
Man C's Communication: According to the graph of Man C's communication (Figure 8), Woman C rates him with a pre-treatment score of 56%, a post-treatment score of 74% and a four-month follow-up score of 79%. Man C scores himself 51%, 51% and 59% respectively.

Behavior counts from the video tapes (Table 5) show a marked increase in Eye Contact from 228 to 431 seconds and an increase in Reflecting Feelings from 0 to 1. Man C showed a decrease in Asking for Clarification from 2 to 1 and a decrease in Evaluating Consequences from 1 (yes) to 0 (no). Thus the increase in two Attending behaviors is accompanied by a decrease in another Attending behavior, plus a decrease in a Problem-solving behavior.

In post-treatment evaluation, Woman C notes that Man C talks to her more, but that he is still away too much. On the four-month follow-up, she says that he now "communicates better verbally; he shares more feelings."

In his post-treatment evaluation of himself, Man C says that he is "more receptive to mate's needs." In his four-month evaluation, he notes that he is a "better listener; more understanding and willing to discuss."

FIGURE 8
RATINGS OF MAN C's COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

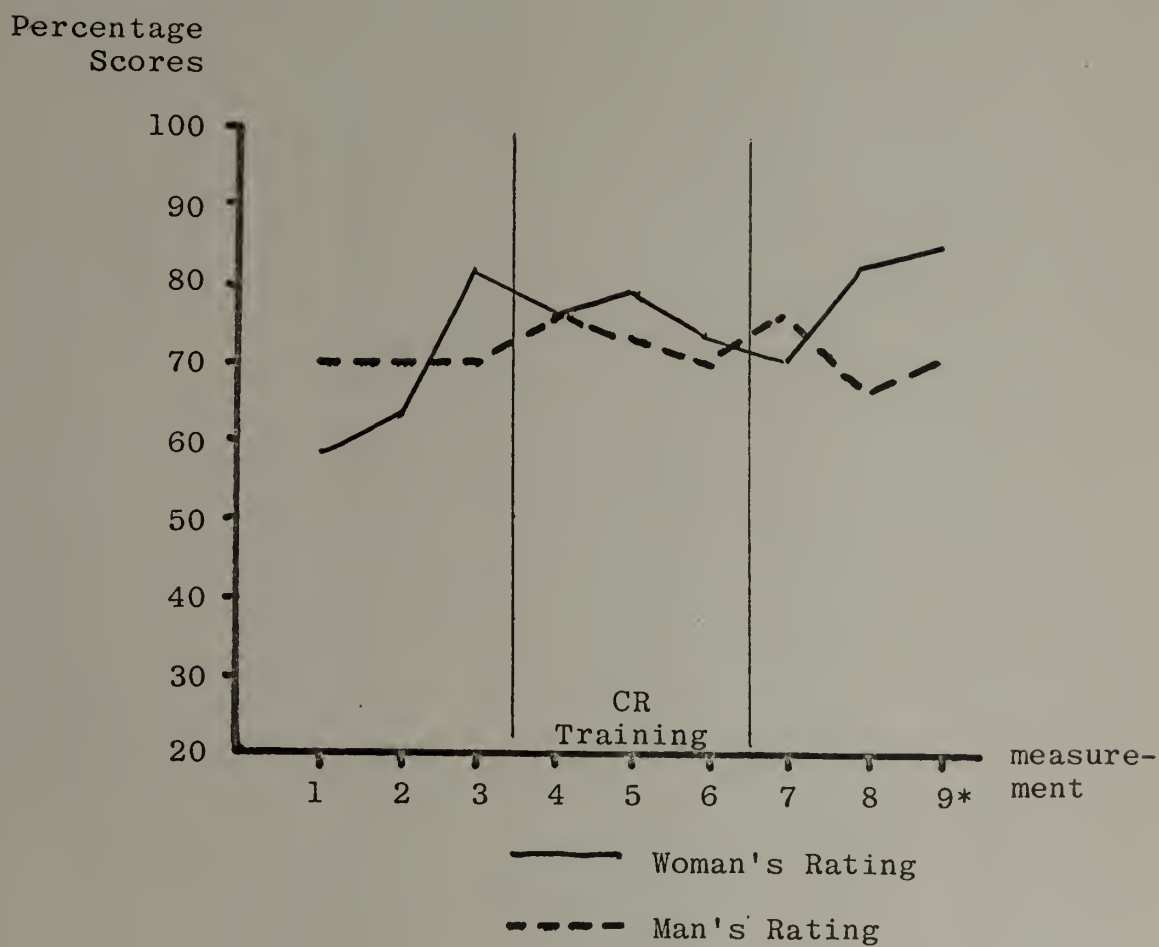
Log observations of Man C indicate some reluctance to change behaviors. Man C would sometimes resist doing the suggested activities. He found the model "too complex." He attempted to build alliance with me and not with Susan, and admitted that there were some things about his communication that he did not want to change, and that he thus could not expect his partner to change.

Summary: According to the MCI graph, Woman C does see some improvement in Man C's communication over the course of the workshop and for four months beyond. Man C does not see any such improvement. The video tapes do not indicate any overall improvement in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Woman C describes Man C as more verbally expressive to her. Man C describes himself as better at attending to and accommodating Woman C's needs. The facilitators' log indicates some reluctance in Man C to changing his communication behaviors.

Couple C's Mutual Communications: According to the graph of their mutual communications (Figure 9), Woman C sees a consistent rise from 58% at pre-treatment, to 82% at post-treatment, to 85% four months later. Man C rates their communications at 70%, 66% and 70%, respectively.

Couple C's combined scores on the video tapes (Table 5) shows a total decrease--from 20 to 16--and an increase in Eye Contact time from 660 to 880.

FIGURE 9
RATINGS OF COUPLE C'S COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

In her post-treatment evaluation of their mutual communication, Woman C reports that she is communicating better; that she knows herself and her partner better. In the four-month follow-up, she mentions that the confrontation she initiated with Man C made their communication more open and better enabled them to express their feelings and wants.

Man C, in post-treatment evaluation, says that they are "more receptive to each other's needs" and able to evaluate their positions without losing contact with each other. In the four-month follow-up, he says that "each is more responsive to the other's needs."

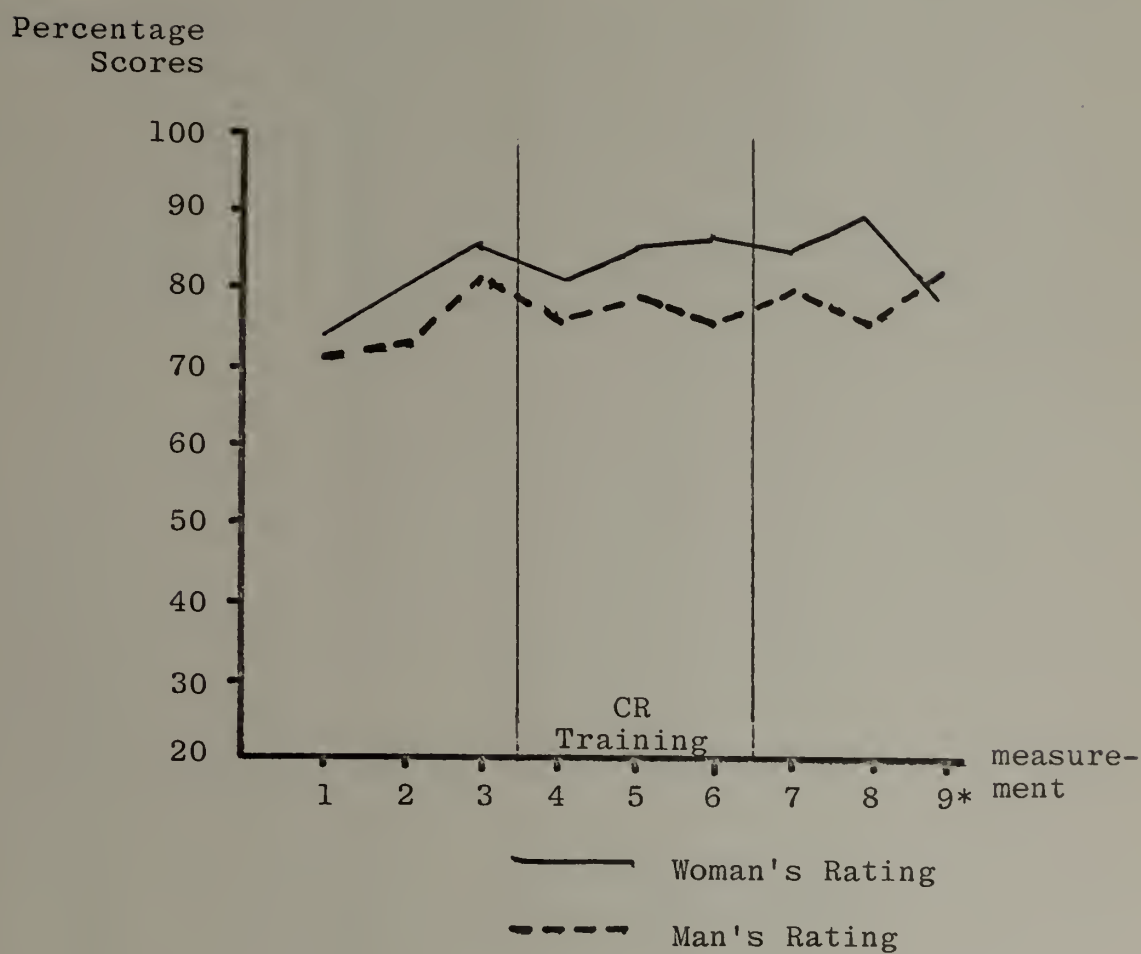
There are no further log observations to be added here.

Summary: According to the MCI graph, Woman C reports their mutual communication as improving over the course of the workshop and four months beyond. Man C does not report any such overall improvement. The video tapes indicate no overall improvement in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Woman C states that she believes they are communicating better; she also notes that a confrontation between them helped improve their communications. Man C finds both Woman C and himself more receptive to the other's needs. No facilitators' log comments are included.

Couple D's Communication Patterns

Woman D's Communication: According to the graph of Woman D's communication patterns (Figure 10), Man D rates her

FIGURE 10
RATINGS OF WOMAN D's COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

TABLE 6

VIDEO TAPE SCORING: BEHAVIORAL COUNTS

COUPLE D

Pre-treatment tape (T-1) = 534"

Post-treatment tape (T-2) = 683"

Stating Skills	Woman		Man		Totals	
	T-1	T-2	T-1	T-2	T-1	T-2
1. Presenting Feelings*	2	1	1	2	3	3
2. Leaving Subject* (scored as minuses)	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. Specifying the Situation	1	1	1	1	2	2
4. Presenting Wants	1	1	1	1	2	2
Attending Skills						
5. Interruptions* (scored as minuses)	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Paraphrasing Verbal Content	0	3	0	1	0	4
7. Reflecting Feelings*	0	2	0	0	0	2
8. Asking for Clarification*	1	5	3	2	4	7
9. Summarizing the Partner's Position	0	0	0	0	0	0
Problem-Solving Skills						
10. Listing Alternatives	1	0	1	0	2	0
11. Evaluating Conse- quences of Each	1	0	1	0	2	0
12. Making a Decision	1	1	1	1	2	2
13. Checking for Mutual Satisfaction	0	1	1	1	1	2
14. Summarizing Decision Particulars	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Scores	8	15	10	9	18	24
15. Eye Contact Time* (in seconds)**	424	472	380	397	804	869

*denotes counts taken from the first nine minutes of the tapes; others are from the total tapes.

**denotes the separate scoring of the Eye Contact Time, because the count is not in behaviors but in seconds.

at 71% pre-treatment, 76% post-treatment, and 83% four months later. Woman D rates herself at 74%, 90% and 74%, respectively.

Data from the video tapes (Table 6) shows that Woman D increased her Eye Contact time from 424 to 472 seconds, increased her Paraphrasing from 0 to 3, her Reflecting Feelings from 0 to 2, her Asking for Clarification from 1 to 5, and her Checking for Mutual Satisfaction from 0 (no) to 1 (yes). Woman D decreased her Presenting Feelings from 2 to 1, her Listing Alternatives from 1 (yes) to 0 (no), and her Evaluating Consequences from 1 (yes) to 0 (no). Thus, her primary increases were in Attending skills, her primary decreases in Problem-solving skills.

Man D's post-treatment evaluation of her changes states that she seems to have "a sense of accomplishment, a general change for the better." His evaluation four months later says she has "more confidence and reassurance."

In her own post-treatment evaluation, Woman D suggests that she probably listens more to people. In the four-month follow-up, she says she does "a lot more talking about things that happen, plans for the summer, or long range plans."

Observations from the facilitators' log indicate resistances on the part of Couple D, in the form of giggling and consistent tardiness. They seemed to prefer to stay at superficial levels of conversation and interaction, resisting attempts to go to levels of deeper conflict.

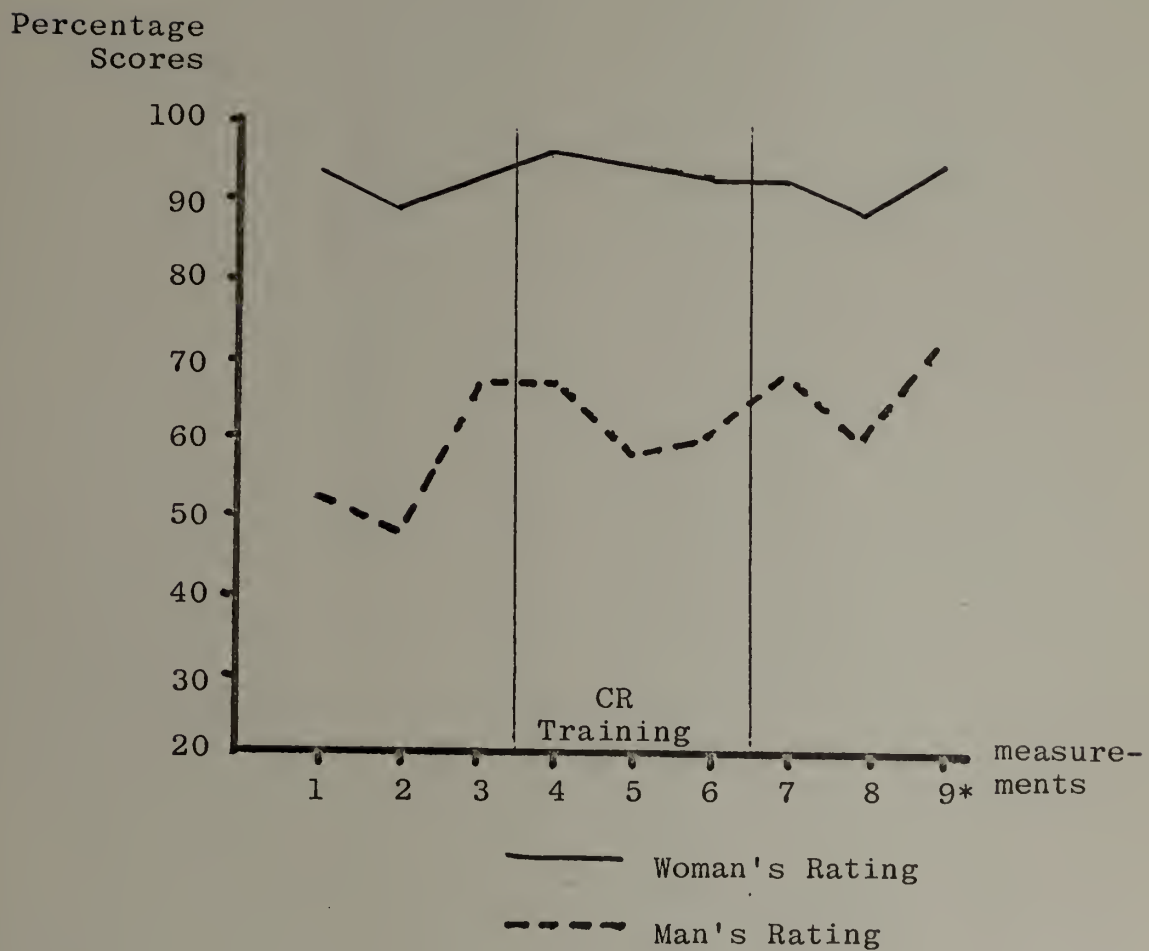
Summary: The MCI graph shows that Woman D's communication increased over the period of time during which the workshop was conducted. Woman D reports that her communication decreased during the four months following the RBW. Man D reports that Woman D's communication increased during that period. The video tapes indicate overall improvement in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Man D sees Woman D as being more confident and assured. Woman D sees herself as more attentive and expressive with Man D. The facilitators' log notes that Couple D demonstrated some resistances in the forms of giggling, tardiness, and superficial interaction with each other.

Man D's Communication: According to the graph (Figure 11), Woman D rates Man D's communication at 95% pre-treatment, 91% post-treatment, and 97% four months later. Man D's own rating of his communication is 54%, 62% and 74%, respectively.

The video tape data (Table 6) shows that Man D increased his Eye Contact time from 380 to 397 seconds, his Presenting Feelings from 1 to 2, and his Paraphrasing from 0 to 1. His Asking for Clarification decreases from 3 to 2, his Listing Alternatives from 1 (yes) to 0 (no), and his Evaluating Consequences from 1 (yes) to 0 (no). Thus, he shows three increases and three decreases.

In post-treatment evaluation, Woman D mentions no changes in Man D's communications. Four months later she says that he is "more receptive and excited about things I'm doing."

FIGURE 11
RATINGS OF MAN D's COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

In his post-treatment evaluation, Man D says that he is trying to become a better listener. Four months later he makes no further comments on his changes.

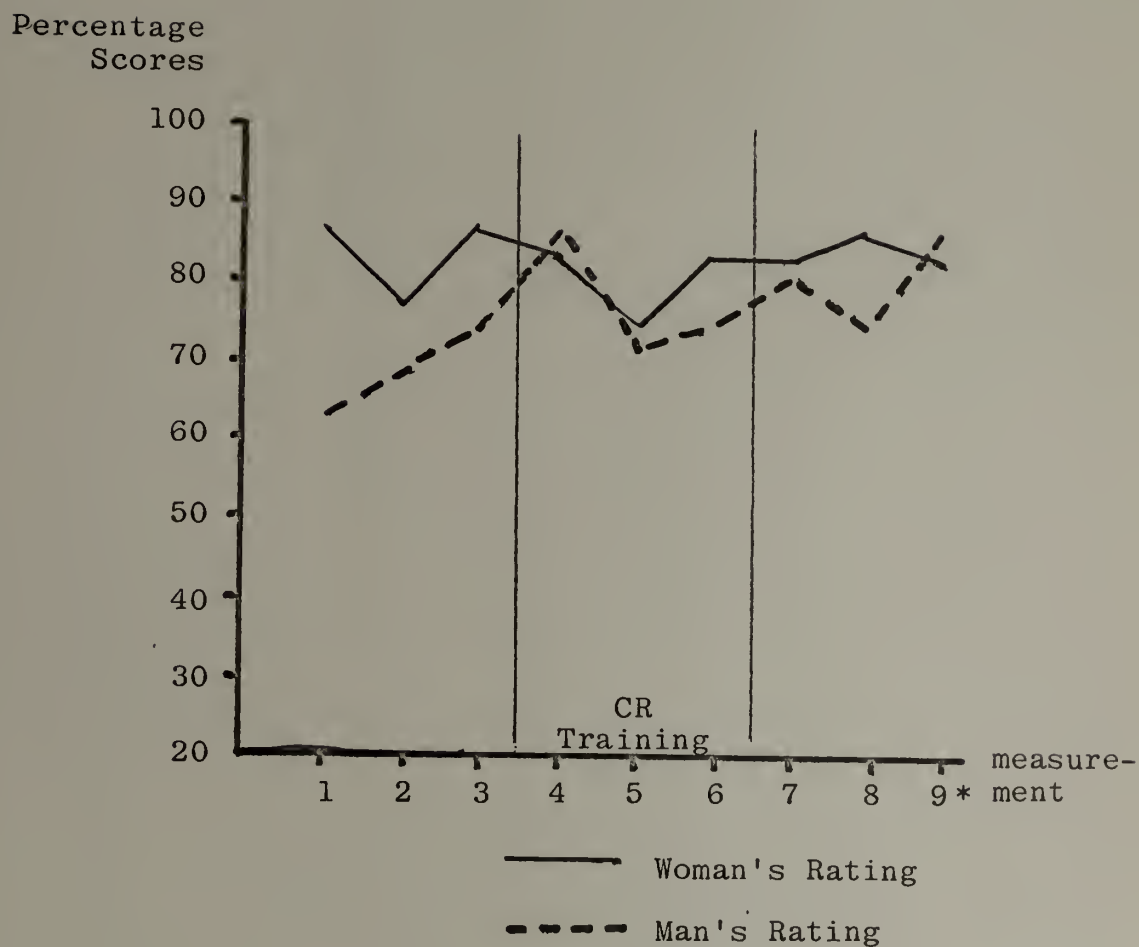
The log observations stated in the preceding section on Woman D hold true here also. Man D seemed to enjoy a certain amount of "clowning," and it was difficult to get him to seriously work on their relationship.

Summary: According to the MCI graph, Man D describes his communication as increasing over the period of time during which the workshop was conducted and remaining at an increased level for four months afterwards. Woman D does not describe an increase in his communication over this same period. The video tapes indicate no overall improvement in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Woman D does say four months after the RBW that Man D is more receptive and excited about things she is doing. Man D says that he is trying to become a better listener. The facilitators' log describes Man D as difficult to persuade to work seriously on his couple relationship.

Couple D's Mutual Communications: According to the graph of their mutual communications (Figure 12), Woman D rates them 88% at pre-treatment, 88% at post-treatment, and 85% four months later. Man D rates their communications at 64%, 76% and 88%, respectively.

The video tape counts for Couple D indicate an increase from 18 to 24, overall, and an increase in Eye Contact from

FIGURE 12
RATINGS OF COUPLE D's COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

804 to 869 seconds. The largest gains seem to be in Eye Contact, Paraphrasing, Reflecting Feelings, and Asking for Clarification--all Attending skills.

In his post-treatment evaluation, Man D says that their mutual communication now contains more workshop feedback jargon. He makes no further comment in his four-month follow-up evaluation.

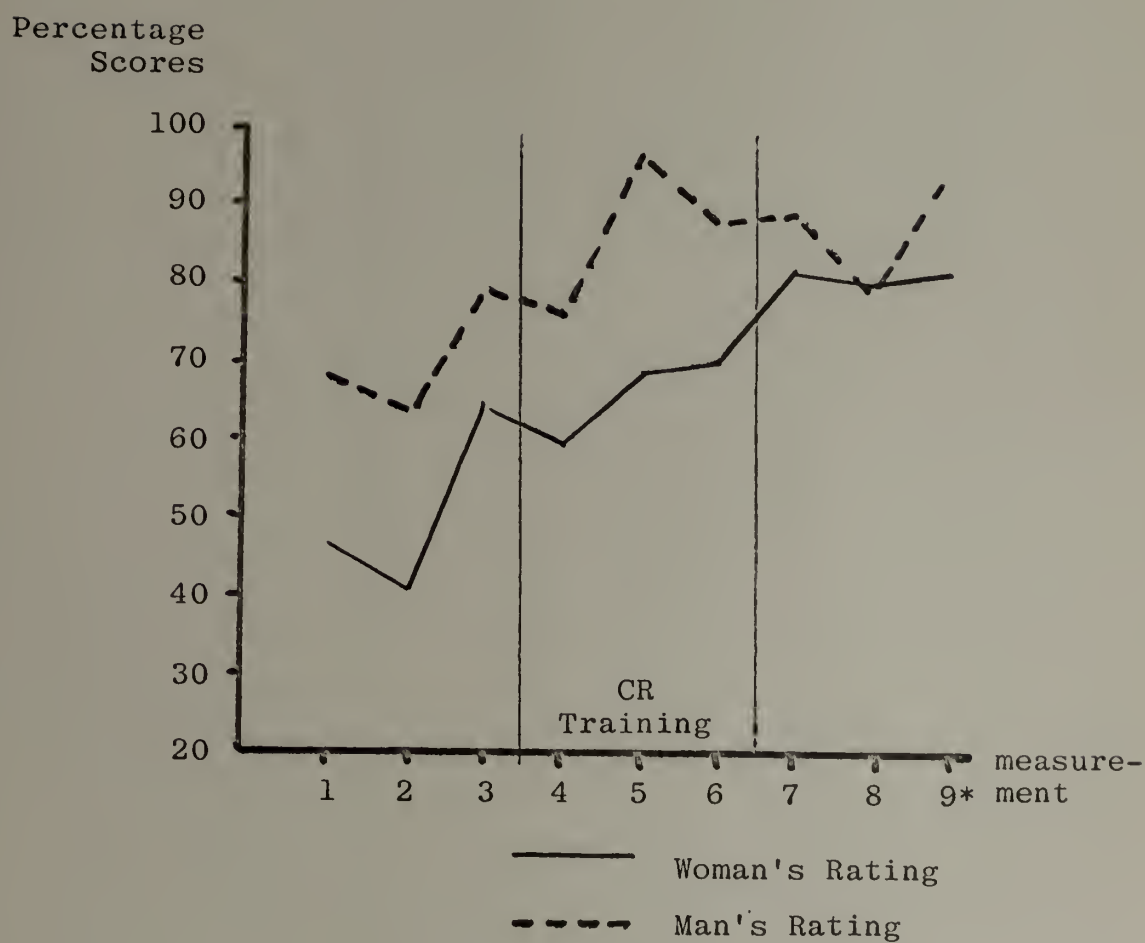
Woman D makes no comment on their mutual communication in either evaluation.

Summary: The MCI graph shows that Man D views their mutual communication as having increased over the period of time during which the workshop was conducted and as having remained at an increased level for four months afterwards. Woman D does not record an overall increase over this same period of time. The video tapes do indicate overall improvement in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Man D states that their communication contains more RBW feedback jargon now. No further facilitators' comments are reported.

Couple E's Communication Patterns

Woman E's Communication: According to the graph of Woman E's communication patterns (Figure 13), Man E rates her at 68% pre-treatment, 79% post-treatment, and 95% four months later. Woman E rates herself 46%, 80% and 82%, respectively.

FIGURE 13
RATINGS OF WOMAN E's COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

TABLE 7

VIDEO TAPE SCORING: BEHAVIORAL COUNTS

COUPLE E

Pre-treatment tape (T-1) = 531"

Post-treatment tape (T-2) = 520"

Stating Skills	Woman		Man		Totals	
	T-1	T-2	T-1	T-2	T-1	T-2
1. Presenting Feelings*	4	1	2	2	6	3
2. Leaving Subject* (scored as minuses)	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. Specifying the Situation	1	1	1	0	2	1
4. Presenting Wants	1	1	1	1	2	2
Attending Skills						
5. Interruptions* (scored as minuses)	0	-1	0	0	0	-1
6. Paraphrasing Verbal Content	0	1	0	1	0	2
7. Reflecting Feelings*	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Asking for Clarification*	1	1	1	1	2	2
9. Summarizing the Partner's Position	0	0	0	0	0	0
Problem-Solving Skills						
10. Listing Alternatives	1	1	0	1	1	2
11. Evaluating Conse- quences of Each	0	0	0	0	0	0
12. Making a Decision	1	1	1	1	2	2
13. Checking for Mutual Satisfaction	0	0	0	1	0	1
14. Summarizing Decision Particulars	0	0	0	0	0	0
	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Scores	9	6	6	8	15	14
15. Eye Contact Time* (in seconds)**	260	481	10	439	270	920

*denotes counts taken from the first nine minutes of the tapes; others are from the total tapes.

**denotes the separate scoring of the Eye Contact Time, because the count is not in behaviors but in seconds.

The video tape report (Table 7) shows that Woman E increased her Eye Contact time from 260 to 481 seconds and increased in Paraphrasing from 0 to 1. She showed a decrease in Presenting Feelings from 4 to 1 and an increase in Interruptions from 0 to 1. Thus there is an increase in two Attending skills and decreases in one Stating skill and one Attending skill.

In his post-treatment evaluation of Woman E's communications, Man E noted that she "takes part more in discussions; makes more personal comments on problems." In the follow-up evaluation four months later, he comments that she "has more openness and frankness; she is better able to state an honest opinion."

In her own post-treatment evaluation, Woman E states that she feels "much more confident" in herself, her views, feelings, etc. She has separated herself from her partner's wants and attitudes, and can stand by her own wants now. In her four-month follow-up, she says that she feels "more confident of the things I want and think. I actually feel and react as an equal, rather than a helper or anything else."

Observations from the facilitators' log indicate that Woman E did not like using the video tape, but felt that she had learned from it. She noted in the workshop that she tends to interrupt her partner too often. By the time the workshop was over, Woman E began to hang on to her partner less; this coincided with her move toward more separateness.

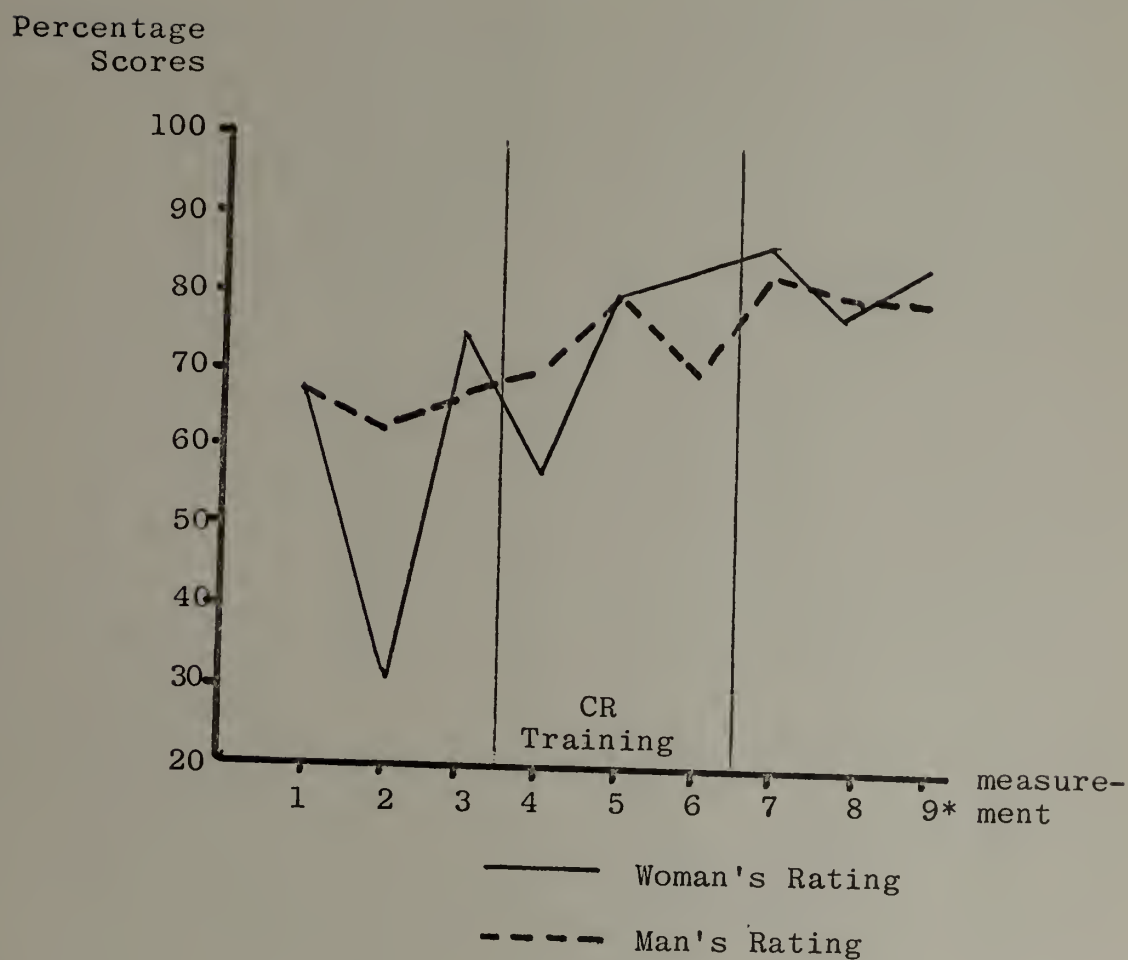
Other log observations note that Couple E seemed to have fun with each other. They played at being "rowdy" with one another. They also entered enthusiastically into both the meditation and the massage experiences. Couple E worked hard at and resolved an actual conflict within the workshop itself.

Summary: The MCI graph shows that Woman E's communication increased over the period of time during which the workshop was conducted and remained at an increased level for four months afterwards. The video tapes indicate no overall improvement in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Both Man E and Woman E see Woman E as more expressive and assertive of herself in her interactions with Man E. The facilitators' log indicates that Woman E disliked the video tape but learned from it. She also entered enthusiastically into the RBW training and seemed to move away from clinging to Man E.

Man E's Communication: The graph of Man E's communication patterns (Figure 14) shows that Woman E rated his pre-treatment communication at 68%, his post-treatment communication at 80%, and his communication four months later at 86%. Man E rated himself 68%, 82% and 82%, respectively.

Data from the video tapes (Table 7) show Man E's Eye Contact increased markedly--from 10 to 439 seconds. His Paraphrasing increased from 0 to 1; his Listing Alternatives increased from 0 (no) to 1 (yes), and his Checking for

FIGURE 14
RATINGS OF MAN E'S COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

Mutual Satisfaction increased from 0 (no) to 1 (yes). His only decrease was in Specifying the Situation, which fell from 1 (yes) to 0 (no).

In her post-treatment evaluation of Man E, Woman E describes him as "much calmer on all issues." She also notes that there is more talking now (her talking), and that this was a central issue for them at the beginning of the workshop. In her four-month evaluation she again affirms that Man E is "more relaxed" and that she takes a more active part in their responsibilities.

In his post-treatment evaluation, Man E describes himself as "more relaxed in approach to problems. I know in time she'll give feedback." In the four-month follow-up he adds that he has "more patience in listening and waiting for her to communicate her thoughts."

Again, observations from the log indicate that Couple E (and Man E) were very active and enthusiastic in the workshop. They both seemed to enjoy a lot of affection for each other. Man E did struggle with his tendency to dominate communications in their relationship. Their work on reducing this tendency was evident in the workshop in the communications exercises and skill practice sessions they performed.

Summary: The MCI graph shows that Man E's communication increased over the period of time during which the workshop was conducted and remained at an increased level for four months afterwards. The video tapes do indicate overall

improvement in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Both Woman E and Man E describe Man E as more relaxed in working out problems with Woman E. He is more patient in waiting and allowing her to state her position. The facilitators' log indicates that Couple E did demonstrate much affection for each other and enthusiasm in their work in the RBW. Man E seemed to make some progress in reducing his tendencies to dominate Woman E in their interactions.

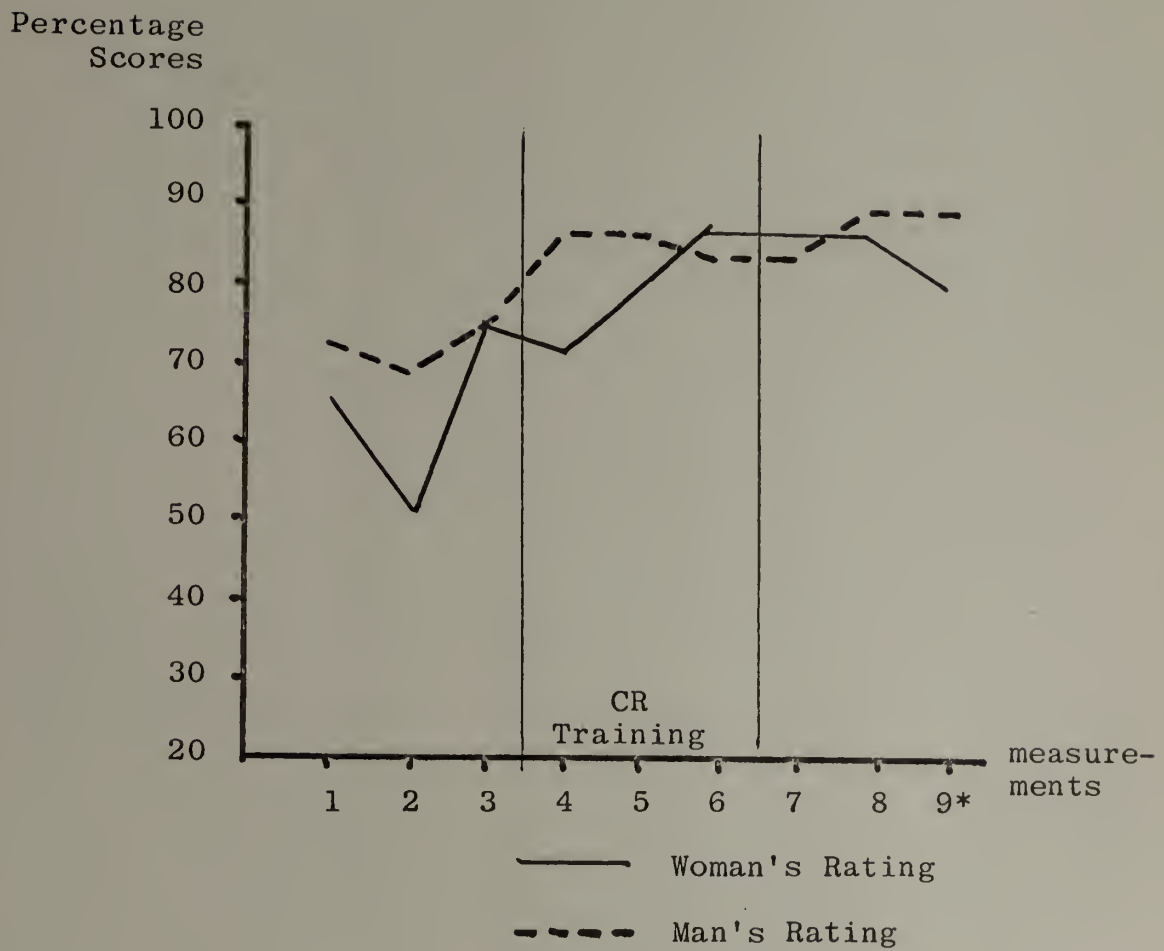
Couple E's Mutual Communications: The graph of their mutual communications (Figure 15) shows that Woman E rates their pre-treatment mutual communication at 66%, post-treatment at 88% and four-month follow-up at 76%. Man E rates them at 73%, 91% and 91%, respectively.

Their video tape scores (Table 7) show an increase in Eye Contact from 270 to 920 seconds, as well as increases in Paraphrasing, Listing Alternatives, and Checking for Mutual Satisfaction. Decreases appear in Presenting Feelings and in Specifying the Situation. Interruptions increase by 1.

In her post-treatment evaluation, Woman E states that their "arguments seem to get somewhere--they are not so one-sided as before." In the four-month follow-up she says that they are "more willing now to talk things out. After a critical blow of temperments, it is easier and more productive to follow the Conflict Resolution mode."

Man E, in his post-treatment evaluation, says that they still argue, but that their communication on problems is not

FIGURE 15
RATINGS OF COUPLE E's COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

so one-sided as before. They use communication skills. In the four-month follow-up, he states, "we get to truth faster; don't dodge answers to questions so much now."

There are no further pertinent observations from the facilitators' log to add here.

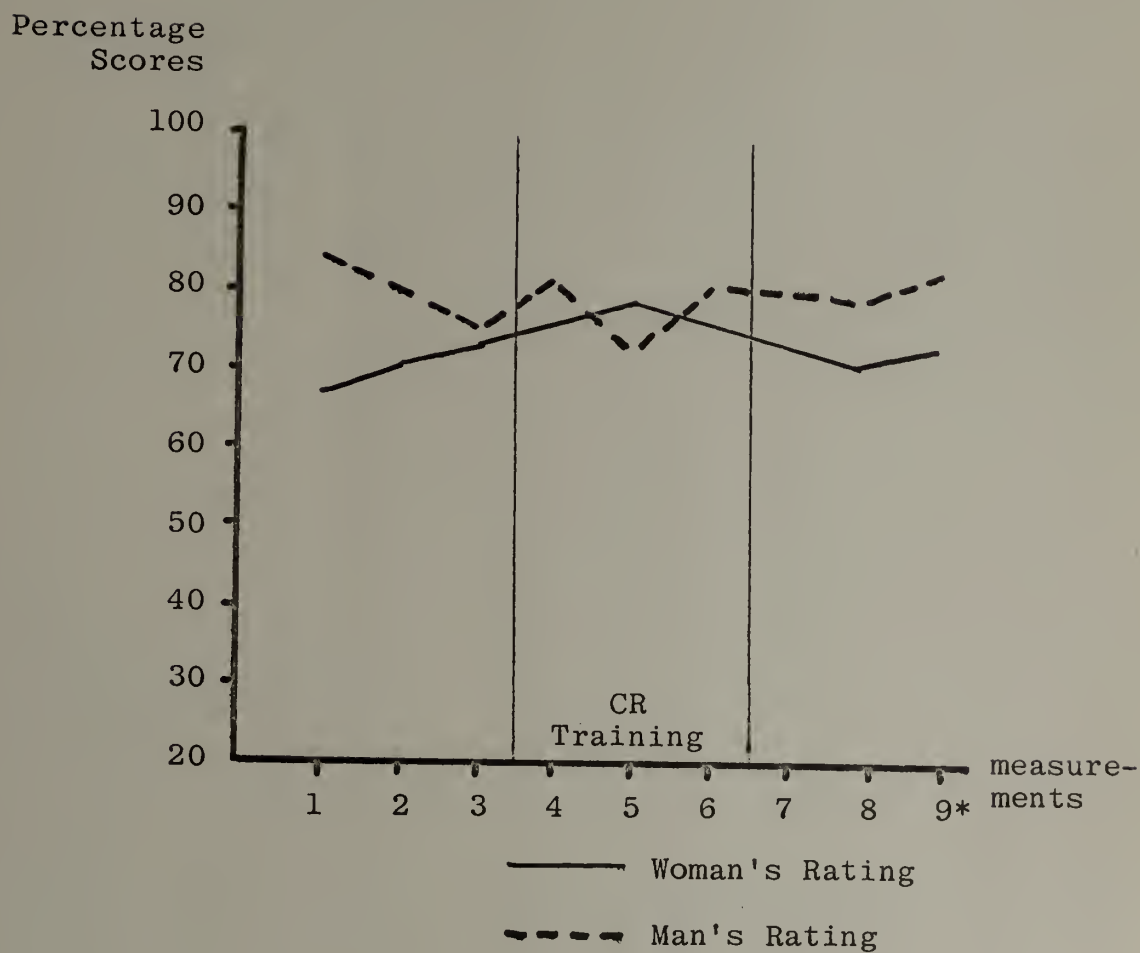
Summary: The MCI graph shows that Couple E's Mutual communication increased over the period of time during which the workshop was conducted and remained at an increased level for four months afterwards. The video tapes indicate no overall increase in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Both Woman E and Man E indicate that their conflicts continue, but that they are much more able to resolve them satisfactorily.

Couple F's Communication Patterns

Woman F's Communication: According to the graph (Figure 16), Man F rates Woman F's communication at 86% pre-treatment, 80% post-treatment and 83% four months later. Woman F rates herself 68%, 72% and 74%, respectively.

According to the video tapes (Table 8), Woman F increased her Eye Contact time from 314 to 423 seconds. She increased her Presenting Feelings from 3 to 6 and her Reflecting Feelings from 0 to 2. She progresses from 2 to 0 in interruptions, increases her Evaluating Consequences, her Making a Decision, and her Checking for Mutual Satisfaction from 0 (no) to 1 (yes). Her only decreases are in

FIGURE 16
RATINGS OF WOMAN F'S COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

TABLE 8

VIDEO TAPE SCORING: BEHAVIORAL COUNTS

COUPLE F

Pre-treatment tape (T-1) = 1142"

Post-treatment tape (T-2) = 569"

Stating Skills	Woman		Man		Totals	
	T-1	T-2	T-1	T-2	T-1	T-2
1. Presenting Feelings*	3	6	1	3	4	9
2. Leaving Subject* (scored as minuses)	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. Specifying the Situation	1	1	1	1	2	2
4. Presenting Wants	1	1	1	1	2	2
Attending Skills						
5. Interruptions* (scored as minuses)	-2	0	-1	0	-3	0
6. Paraphrasing Verbal Content	1	0	0	0	1	0
7. Reflecting Feelings*	0	2	0	1	0	3
8. Asking for Clarification*	3	1	1	5	4	6
9. Summarizing the Partner's Position	0	0	0	0	0	0
Problem-Solving Skills						
10. Listing Alternatives	0	0	1	1	1	1
11. Evaluating Conse- quences of Each	0	1	0	1	0	2
12. Making a Decision	0	1	0	1	0	2
13. Checking for Mutual Satisfaction	0	1	0	1	0	2
14. Summarizing Decision Particulars	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Scores	7	14	5	15	12	29
15. Eye Contact Time* (in seconds)**	314	423	363	421	677	844

*denotes counts taken from the first nine minutes of the tapes; others are from the total tapes.

**denotes the separate scoring of the Eye Contact Time, because the count is not in behaviors but in seconds.

Paraphrasing, from 1 to 0, and in Asking for Clarification, from 3 to 1. Thus, she records improvements in seven skills, decreases in two.

In his post-treatment evaluation, Man F states that his partner evidences no major changes yet. He does mention that she practices the CR skills with him and that she asks for and enjoys massages. In his four-month follow-up evaluation, Man F states that Woman F has an appreciation for massages and a strong interest in trying Transcendental Meditation. She also lets him finish a point before answering.

Woman F, in her post-treatment evaluation, says that she is "more able to relax," and that she tries more to listen till it is her turn to talk. In her four-month evaluation she states that she is "less nervous and less self-conscious."

Observations from the facilitators' log indicate that Woman F was generally very serious and involved in the training process. She did have some difficulty sharing herself with people whom she felt she didn't know very well. She was quite open to learning new relationship skills. She and her partner were the couple who practiced the meditation and massage most often outside of the workshop meetings. Woman F did not like the video tape, but felt she had learned from it.

Summary: The MCI graph shows that Woman F sees her own communication as increased over the period of time during

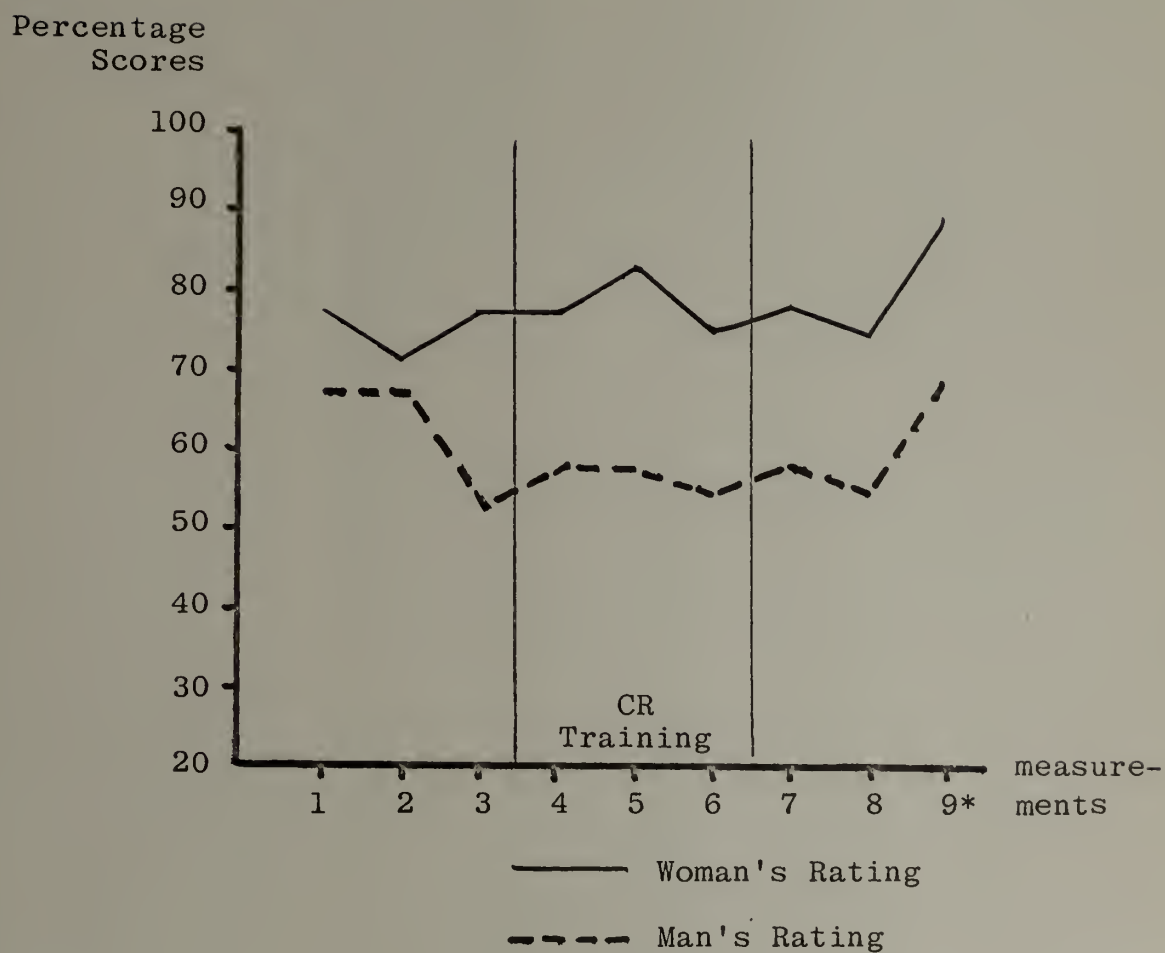
which the workshop was conducted and for the four months following the workshop. Man F does not see Woman F's communication as increased over this same period of time. The video tapes do indicate overall increase in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Man F reports that Woman F enjoys massages, is interested in Transcendental Meditation, and is better at Attending skills. Woman F describes herself as more relaxed and as better at attending to Man F's communications. The facilitators' log indicates that Woman F was quite serious and involved in learning the skills taught in the RBW training, although she had some difficulty in revealing her feelings in front of non-intimates.

Man F's Communication: According to the graph (Figure 17), Woman F rates Man F's communications at 79% pre-treatment, 77% post-treatment and 91% four months later. Man F rates himself 68%, 56% and 70% respectively.

Man F's video tape scores (Table 8) show an increase in Eye Contact time from 363 to 421 seconds. He increased in Presenting Feelings, from 1 to 3, in Reflecting Feelings, from 0 to 1, and in Asking for Clarification, from 1 to 5. His interruptions decrease from 1 to 0. He increases from 0 (no) to 1 (yes) in Evaluating Consequences, Making a Decision, and Checking for Mutual Satisfaction. He shows no decreases at all.

In her post-treatment evaluation of him, Woman F says that "he is more willing to listen and try to understand

FIGURE 17
RATINGS OF MAN F'S COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

(even criticism)." He is also "more willing to touch me." In her four-month follow-up, she says "we listen to each other more, try to understand the other's feelings."

Man F, in his post-treatment evaluation, says that he tries in disagreements to follow the CR outline. He also says he tried the meditation and the massage. He fell asleep meditating, but he likes giving the massages. He also mentions that he has followed through on an issue he and Woman F worked out in the group. He has done what he said he would do, and the conflict is resolved. In his four-month follow-up, he says that he tries to follow the CR guidelines for discussing topics. He notes that he is more aware of his interruptions.

Log observations indicate that both Man F and Woman F worked hard in the group and outside of it. Both supported each other in the workshop.

Summary: The MCI graph shows that Man F's communication did not increase over the period of time during which the workshop was conducted. The graph does show an increase in Man F's communication over the four months after the RBW. The video tapes indicate overall increase in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Woman F describes Man F as more willing to try to listen to her, to understand her, and to touch her. Man F says that he tries to follow the CR outline in working on conflicts, that he likes massage, and that he has fulfilled his part of an agreement

which he and Woman F had worked out as a conflict resolution during the workshop. The facilitators' log indicates that both Man F and Woman F worked hard on their relationship, both inside and outside of the group and that both were supportive of each other.

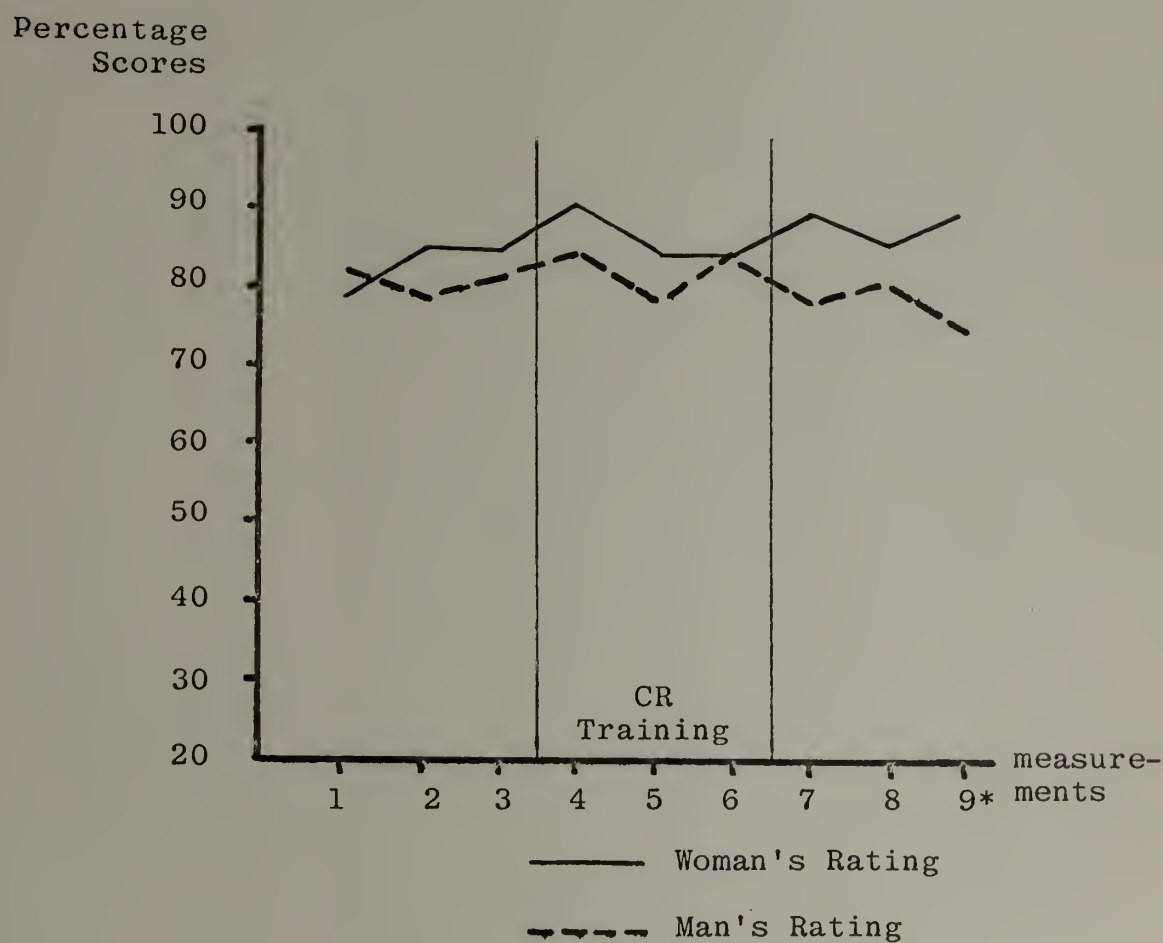
Couple F's Mutual Communications: According to the graph (Figure 18), Woman F rates their communication pre-treatment at 79%, post-treatment at 82%, and four months later at 91%. Man F rates them at 82%, 82% and 76%, respectively.

Video tape results (Table 8) show that their combined Eye Contact time increased from 677 to 844 seconds. Increases are recorded for Presenting Feelings, Reflecting Feelings, Asking for Clarification, Evaluating Consequences, Making a Decision, and Checking for Mutual Satisfaction. Interruptions decrease from 3 to 0. The only negative decrease is in Paraphrasing, from 1 to 0. There is an overall communications increase from 12 to 29.

In her post-treatment evaluation, Woman F makes no comment on their mutual communication. In her four-month follow-up she merely states that it is "much improved."

Man F, in his post-treatment evaluation, says that they are "more attentive to each other" and that they "take the other's feelings into consideration more." In his four-month follow-up, he says that they are trying to follow the guidelines in problem-solving--"acceptance of the validity and

FIGURE 18
RATINGS OF COUPLE F's COMMUNICATION PATTERNS



* Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

reality of working from two differing opinions to a mutually agreeable solution."

The only addition from the log is an observation that, as the workshop proceeded, Couple F interacted more with each other.

Summary: The MCI graph indicates that Woman F rates their mutual communication as improved over the time during which the workshop was conducted and for four months beyond the workshop. Man F does not rate their mutual communication as improved over that period of time. The video tapes indicate overall increase in the skills sought out for identification and scoring. Woman F states that their Mutual communication is "much improved." Man F describes himself and Woman F as better at Attending to each other. He also says that they try to follow the guidelines in problem solving. The facilitators' log indicates that Couple F interacted more with each other as the RBW proceeded.

Statistical Indications from the Video Tapes and the Marital Communications Inventory

In this section the results of the statistical analyses of the data for all the men, all the women, and all the couples as groups will be presented.

The data given in the tables and figures at the end of this chapter do not represent all the statistical analyses which were performed. They have been selected for

presentation because they were significant at either the .05 level or the .01 level of confidence. This means that the probability of these results occurring simply by chance are 5 in 100 or 1 in 100 respectively (Freund, 1973).

Throughout this section and throughout this study, the abbreviation MCI is used to stand for the Marital Communications Inventory. The raw scores and the percentage scores from the MCI appear in Tables 28-29 at the end of this chapter. Raw scores were converted to percentage scores at times in order to compare one person's rating of her/his communication with the partner's rating of the same communication (since there are different numbers of items in both categories). The percentage is derived from the highest possible score on a particular section of the MCI divided by the raw score for that section.

Indications of Improvement in Communications for the Couples: There were several indications that these couples did improve their communications patterns with each other, both during the course of the workshop and during the four months that followed it. These indications are presented here.

t Tests. Pre- and post-treatment scores of all the couples taken as a group ($N = 6$) on their video-taped simulated conflicts were subjected to a one-tailed t test. The formula for testing an hypothesis about the difference between two

dependent means was used: $t = \frac{(\bar{X} - \bar{Y} - (x - y)_{hyp}}{S_{\bar{x}-\bar{y}}}$ (Minium,

1970). This was done to see if the change between the pre- and post-test means was significant. The change score was significant at the .05 level (Table 9).

A comparison of the MCI ratings of the women's communication from measurement #2 and measurement #3 was subjected to a one-tailed t test. The change score was significant at the .05 level (Table 10).

A comparison of the MCI ratings of the men's communication from measurement #2 and measurement #3 was subjected to a one-tailed t test. The change score was significant at the .05 level (Table 11).

A comparison of the MCI ratings of the couples' mutual communication from measurement #2 and from measurement #3 was subjected to a one-tailed t test. The change score was significant at the .05 level (Table 12).

A comparison of the MCI ratings of the couples' mutual communication from measurement #6 and measurement #7 was subjected to a one-tailed t test. The change score was significant at the .05 level (Table 13).

A comparison of the MCI ratings of the men's communication from measurement #3 and measurement #9 was subjected to a one-tailed t test. The change score was significant at the .05 level (Table 14).

A comparison of the MCI ratings of the couples' mutual communication from measurement #3 and measurement #9 was subjected to a one-tailed t test. The change score was significant at the .05 level (Table 15).

A comparison of the MCI ratings of the men's communication from measurement #8 and measurement #9 was subjected to a one-tailed t test. The change score was significant at the .05 level (Table 16).

A comparison of the MCI ratings of the couples' mutual communication from measurement #1 and measurement #8 was subjected to a one-tailed t test. The change score was significant at the .05 level (Table 17).

A comparison of the MCI ratings of the couples' mutual communication from measurement #1 and measurement #9 was subjected to a one-tailed t test. The change score was significant at the .05 level (Table 18).

A comparison of the MCI ratings of the men's communication from measurement #1 and measurement #9 was subjected to a one-tailed t test. The change score was significant at the .05 level (Table 19).

Analyses of Variance. The graphs of the means of the couples' ratings of their communication patterns (Figure 21) indicate a rising slope in the scores over the nine measurements. In order to accommodate the rising MCI scores to the analysis of variance model--which is based on scores remaining at the same level--an adjustment was made to the raw scores.

The simplest basic model for a rising slope is an arithmetical progression. Thus the adjustment in the raw scores was accomplished by simply subtracting the arithmetical progression of the slope from the raw scores. The result was that the MCI raw scores were leveled and rendered usable for the analysis of variance.

Since the treatment effects were represented by the arithmetical progression, once this was subtracted from the scores, the only remaining variation was hypothesized to be in individual differences. The analyses of variance were performed on the data for the women, the men, and their mutual communication in order to test this hypothesis.

An exception in the data was made by dropping measurement #2 in all the analyses, because the couples' ratings all decreased at this point. It was hypothesized that either the treatment had not taken effect by measurement #2 or that the common pattern of initial behavior decrease after a treatment intervention had taken place (Ullman and Krasner, 1965).

In determining the arithmetical progression of the women's raw MCI scores, the scores were pooled, and it was estimated that each woman increased an average of 3 points from measure to measure. To subtract the arithmetical progression from the raw scores, the following procedure was followed: The women's scores for measure #1 were left unadjusted. Then an increment of 3 points was subtracted from each woman's score for measurement #2, 6 points from each

score for measurement #3, . . . , and 18 points from each score for measurement #8. Thus the women's raw MCI scores were leveled off and rendered suitable for an analysis of variance.

The women's adjusted MCI raw scores (N=6) were subjected to an analysis of variance. This was done to determine whether the remaining variation in the data was due to individual differences. The hypothesis was confirmed at the .01 level of confidence (Table 20).

It was noted that even after adjusting the raw scores, Woman B's scores were consistently deviant from those of the other women. Since this is a small sample it was decided to test the effect of deleting her scores from the data. An analysis of variance was performed on the adjusted scores of the remaining women (N=5), and a higher significance was attained at the .01 level (Table 21).

To test the robustness of the results for the women, first Woman B's scores were reinstated in the data. Then the scores of Woman D, who had contributed most to individual variation (significance), were deleted. An analysis of variance was performed on the adjusted scores of the remaining five women (N=5). Significance was attained again at the .01 level. However, as expected, the F_{sample} value was lower than in the previous two analyses (Table 22).

In determining the arithmetical progression of the men's raw MCI scores, the scores were pooled, and it was estimated

that each man increased an average of 1 point from measure to measure. Thus an increment of 1 was subtracted from each man's score for measurement #2, 2 from each score for measurement #3, . . . , and 7 from each score for measurement #8. The men's scores were leveled off in this manner and rendered suitable for an analysis of variance.

The men's adjusted MCI raw scores ($N=6$) were subjected to an analysis of variance. Significance was attained at the .01 level of confidence (Table 23).

It was noted that even after adjusting the raw scores, Man B's scores were consistently deviant from those of the other men. Since this is a small sample, it was decided to test the effect of deleting Man B's scores from the data. An analysis of variance was performed on the adjusted scores of the remaining men ($N=5$), and a higher significance was attained at the .01 level (Table 24).

To test the robustness of the results for the men, Man B's scores were reinstated in the data. Then the scores of Man A, who had contributed most to individual variation (and thus to significance), were deleted. An analysis of variance was performed on the adjusted scores of the remaining five men ($N=5$). Significance was again attained at the .01 level, but it was much lower than in the previous two analyses (Table 25).

In determining the arithmetical progression of the couples' mutual communication scores, the percentage scores were

pooled, and it was estimated that each person's scoring of the mutual communication increased an average of one point from measure to measure. Thus an increment of 1 was subtracted from each person's score for measurement #2, 2 from each score for measurement #3, . . . and 7 from each score for measurement #8. The mutual communication scores were leveled off in this manner and rendered suitable for an analysis of variance.

The adjusted percentage MCI scores for the couples' mutual communication (N=12) were subjected to an analysis of variance. Significance was attained at the .01 level of confidence (Table 26).

In order to test the robustness of the results for the mutual communication, the scores of Woman A and Women E, who had contributed most to individual variation (and thus to significance), were deleted. An analysis of variance was performed on the adjusted scores of the remaining 10 people (N=10). Significance was attained at the .01 level, but it was much lower than in the previous analysis (Table 27).

Summary

This chapter presented both the quantitative and qualitative data which was collected and analyzed to evaluate the Couples Relationship Building Workshop (RBW). The workshop extended over eight successive Tuesday evenings--October 23 to December 11, 1974. Data was collected before, during, and

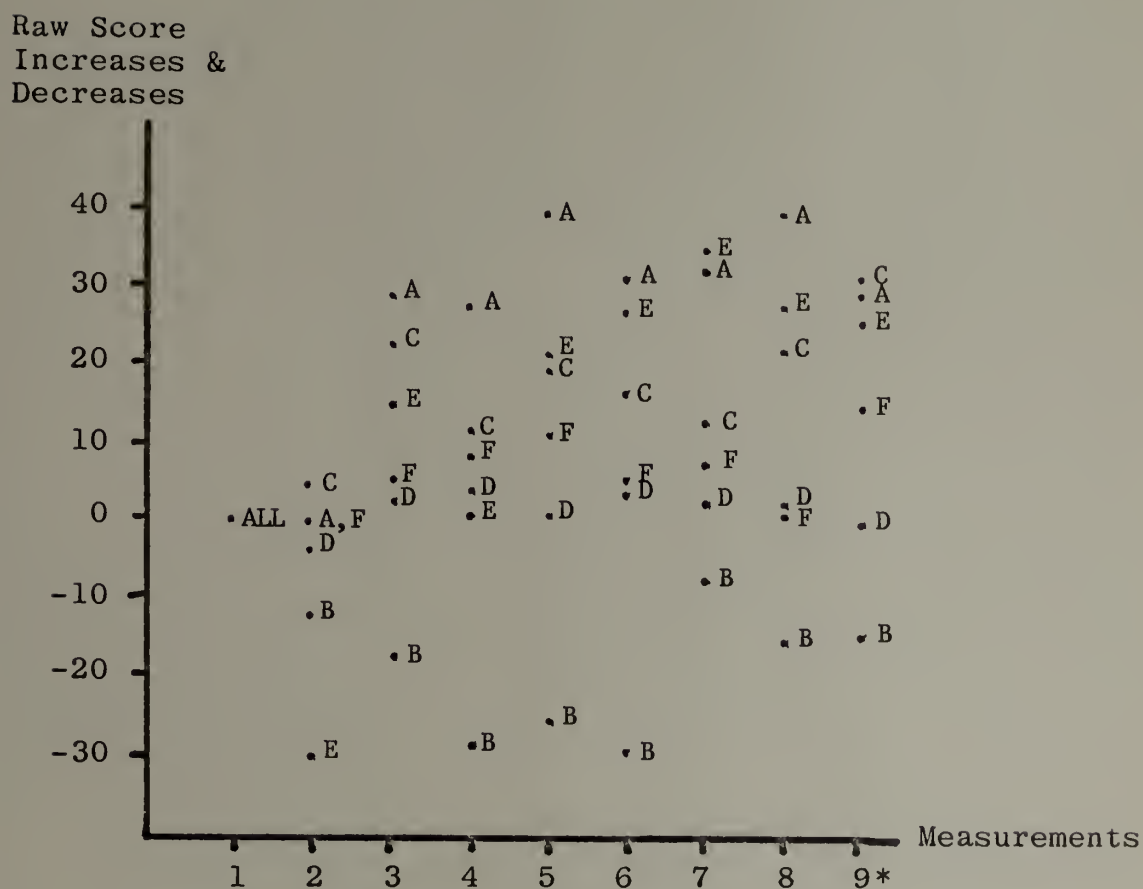
after the training by the use of the Marital Communications Inventory (MCI), pre- and post-treatment video-taped conflict simulations, open-ended evaluations, and a facilitators' log. A four-months follow-up evaluation was also conducted.

The basic question which the results in this chapter addressed was: did these individuals and/or couples increase their communications over the six months period of the RBW and the follow-up evaluation?

The data were presented in two forms: First, all of the data for the individuals and the couples were given. This data was summarized as the Man's communication, the Woman's communication, and their Mutual communication for each couple. In the second section the statistical analyses of the data were presented for the participants as a group or as groups. The Men's communication, the Women's communication, and their Mutual communication were grouped and analyzed separately.

FIGURE 19

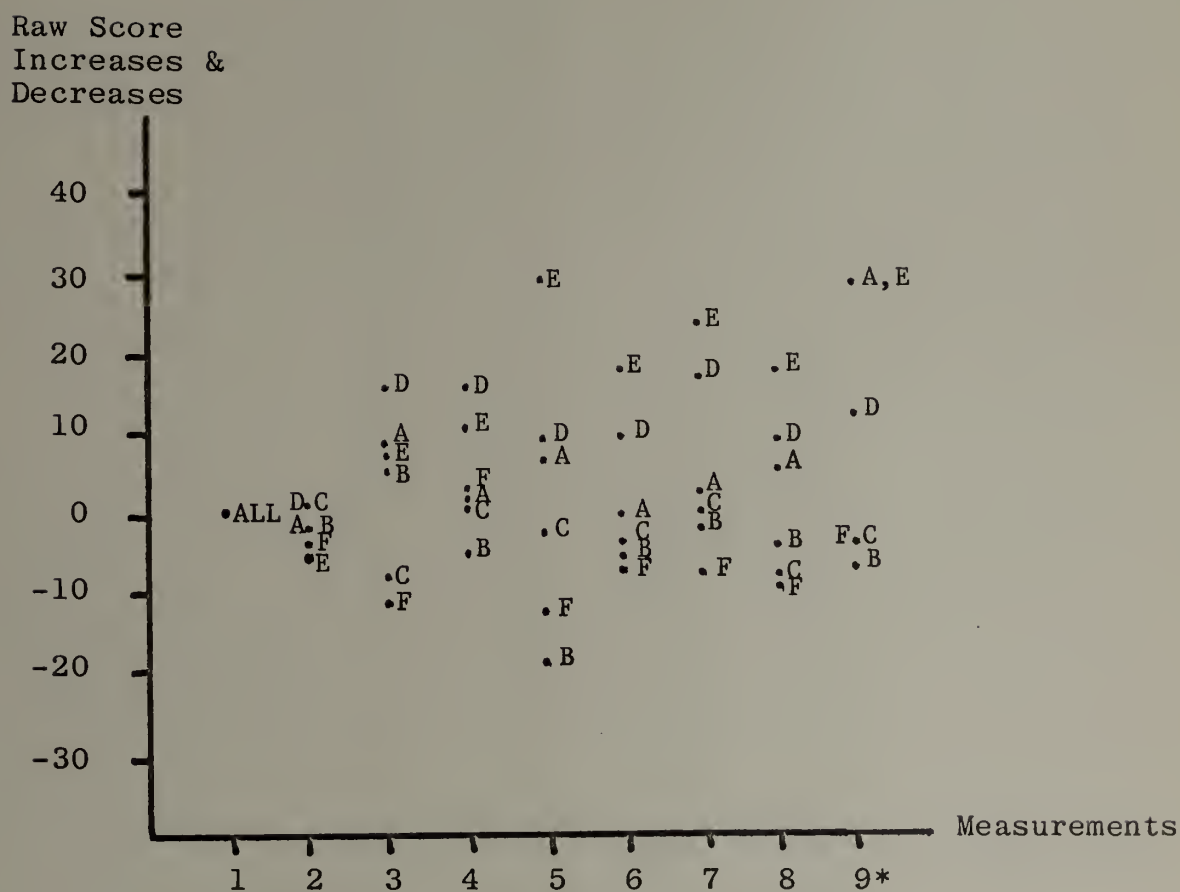
COMPARATIVE CHANGES IN WOMEN'S MCI SCORES
FROM A BASE SCORE OF ZERO



* Denotes measurement four months after
end of Relationship Building Workshop.

FIGURE 20

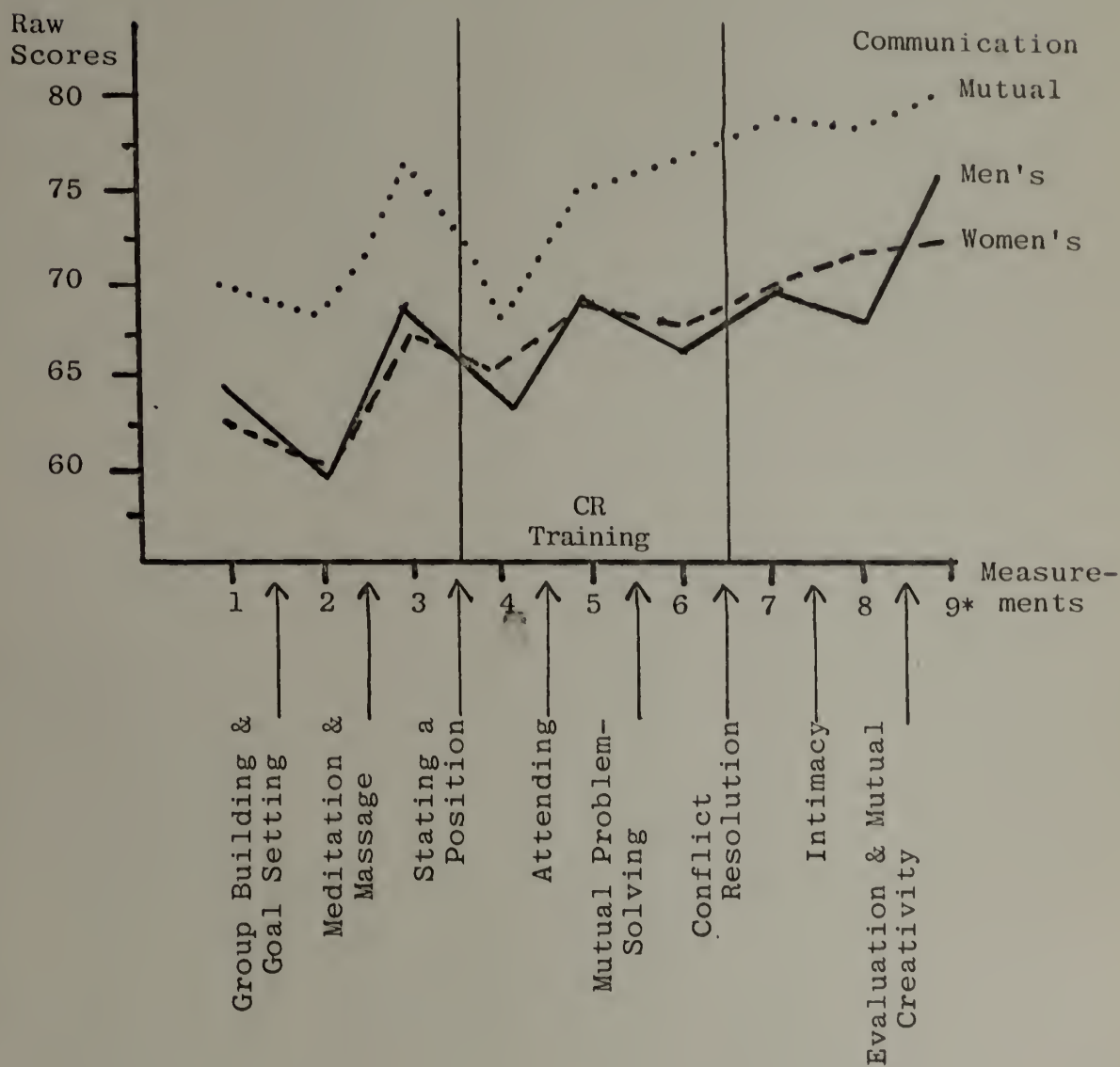
COMPARATIVE CHANGES IN MEN'S MCI SCORES
FROM A BASE SCORE OF ZERO



*Denotes measurement four months after
end of Relationship Building Workshop.

FIGURE 21

THE MEANS OF THE COUPLES' RATINGS OF THEMSELVES
AND THEIR MUTUAL COMMUNICATIONS PATTERNS



*Denotes measurement four months after end of Relationship Building Workshop.

TABLE 9

T TEST

A one-tailed t test performed on the scores from the pre- and post-treatment video-taped conflict simulations recorded a significant change in the Mutual Communication of the Couples at the .05 level:

n	\bar{x}	s	t	$t \frac{s}{n}$
6	6.83	8.135	1.943	6.581

TABLE 10

T TEST

A one-tailed t test of the MCI percentage scores from measurement #2 and measurement #3 records significant change at the .05 level in the Women's communication over that interval:

n	\bar{x}	s	t	$t \frac{s}{n}$
6	19.667	21.579	1.943	17.458

TABLE 11

T TEST

A one-tailed t test of the MCI percentage scores from measurement #2 and measurement #3 records significant change at the .05 level in the Men's communication over that interval:

n	\bar{x}	s	t	$t \frac{s}{n}$
6	15.5	18.82	1.943	15.228

TABLE 12

T TEST

A one-tailed t test of the MCI percentage scores from measurement #2 and measurement #3 records significant change at the .05 level in the Couples' Mutual Communication over that interval:

n	\bar{x}	s	t	$t \frac{s}{n}$
6	14.5	12.942	1.943	10.470

TABLE 13

T TEST

A one-tailed t test of the MCI percentage scores from measurement #6 and measurement #7 records significant change at the .05 level in the Couples' Mutual Communication over that interval:

n	\bar{x}	s	t	$t \frac{s}{n}$
6	3.667	3.493	1.943	2.826

TABLE 14

T TEST

A one-tailed t test of the MCI percentage scores from measurement #3 and measurement #9 (four-month follow-up) records significant change at the .05 level in the Men's communication over that interval:

n	\bar{x}	s	t	$t \frac{s}{n}$
6	15.667	16.07	1.943	13.009

TABLE 15

T TEST

A one-tailed t test of the MCI percentage scores from measurement #3 and measurement #9 (four-month follow-up) records significant change at the .05 level in the Couples' Mutual Communication over that interval.

n	\bar{x}	s	t	$t \frac{s}{n}$
6	7.5	6.189	1.943	5.007

TABLE 16

T TEST

A one-tailed t test of the MCI percentage scores from measurement #8 and measurement #9 (four-month follow-up) records significant change at the .05 level in the Men's communication:

n	\bar{x}	s	t	$t \frac{s}{n}$
6	15.883	10.93	1.943	14.36

TABLE 17

T TEST

A one-tailed t test of the MCI percentage scores from measurement #1 and measurement #8 records significant change at the .05 level in the Couples' Mutual Communication:

n	\bar{x}	s	t	$t \frac{s}{n}$
6	17.167	17.75	1.943	14.36

TABLE 18

T TEST

A one-tailed t test of the MCI percentage scores from measurement #1 and measurement #9 (four-month follow-up) records a significant change at the .05 level in the Couples' Mutual Communication:

n	\bar{x}	s	t	$t \frac{s}{n}$
6	19.667	13.89	1.943	11.237

TABLE 19

T TEST

A one-tailed t test of the MCI percentage scores from measurement #1 and measurement #9 (four-month follow-up) records a significant change at the .05 level in the Men's communication:

n	\bar{x}	s	t	$t \frac{s}{n}$
6	22.83	13.89	1.943	11.237

TABLE 20
ONE-FACTOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Of All Women's adjusted MCI raw scores
(omitting Measurement #2)

Source	ss	df	MS	F _{sample}	F _{table}
row	7658	5	1532	18.5	3.58*
error	2973	36	83		
total	10631	41			

* denotes significance at the .01 level of confidence

TABLE 21

ONE-FACTOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Of Women's adjusted MCI raw scores excluding Woman B
(and omitting measurement #2)

Source	SS	df	MS	F _{sample}	F _{table}
row	6580	4	1645	26.0	4.02*
error	1899	30	63.3		
total	8479	34			

* denotes significance at the .01 level of confidence

TABLE 22
ONE-FACTOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Of Women's adjusted MCI raw scores excluding Woman D
(and omitting measurement #2)

Source	SS	df	MS	F_{sample}	F_{table}
row	2954	4	738	8.4	4.02*
error	2638	30	88		
total	5592	34			

* denotes significance at the .01 level of confidence

TABLE 23
ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Of Men's adjusted MCI raw scores
(omitting measurement #2)

Source	SS	df	MS	F _{sample}	F _{table}
row	19,222	5	3844	83	3.58*
error	1669	36	46.4		
total	20.891	41			

* denotes significance at the .01 level of confidence

TABLE 24

ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Of the Men's adjusted MCI raw scores excluding Man B
(and omitting measurement #2)

Source	SS	df	MS	F _{sample}	F _{table}
row	16,506	4	4126	99	4.02*
error	1242	30	41.4		
total	17,748	34			

* denotes significance at the .01 level of confidence

TABLE 25

ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Of the Men's adjusted MCI raw scores excluding Man A
(and omitting measurement #2)

Source	SS	df	MS	F_{sample}	F_{table}
row	2212	4	553	13.8	4.02*
error	1323	30	44.1		
total	3535	34			

* denotes significance at the .01 level of confidence

TABLE 26

ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Of the adjusted MCI percentage scores for the Couples'
Mutual Communication (omitting measurement #2)

Source	SS	df	MS	F_{sample}	F_{table}
row	8408	11	764	17	2.5*
error	3673	84	44		
total	12081	95			

* denotes significance at the .05 level of confidence

TABLE 27

ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Of the adjusted MCI percentage scores for the Couples'
 Mutual Communication excluding Woman A and
 Woman E (and omitting measurement #2)

Source	SS	df	MS	F _{sample}	F _{table}
row	2952	9	328	6.4	2.6*
error	3611	70	51		
total	6563	79			

*denotes significance at the .01 level of confidence

TABLE 28
MARITAL COMMUNICATIONS INVENTORY
RAW SCORES

Couple	Administrations--weekly							Four-month follow-up	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A									
woman	50	59	88	87	99	92	93	99	90
man	46	44	55	49	53	46	49	52	76
B									
woman	106	94	89	78	81	79	99	91	92
man	117	115	123	112	98	112	116	114	111
C									
woman	73	73	96	85	93	90	86	96	105
man	94	95	82	95	92	91	93	87	91
D									
woman	121	117	124	125	122	125	124	124	121
man	89	90	105	105	99	99	107	99	103
E									
woman	85	54	100	86	107	112	120	113	111
man	95	90	103	107	125	114	120	114	125
F									
woman	104	104	109	112	115	109	112	106	119
man	110	106	99	116	98	104	103	102	107

TABLE 29
MARITAL COMMUNICATIONS INVENTORY
COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE SCORES FOR PARTNERS

Couple	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	(In Percentages)								
<u>Couple A</u>									
woman's communication as reported by									
woman	26	21	59	54	59	41	62	56	51
man	30	24	39	35	36	32	33	38	59
man's communication as reported by									
woman	45	48	61	64	71	72	64	73	88
man	30	24	39	35	36	32	33	38	59
mutual communication as reported by									
woman	58	58	76	73	88	85	82	88	76
man	48	45	52	48	48	45	52	52	66
<u>Couple B</u>									
woman's communication as reported by									
woman	64	62	59	49	51	46	68	59	56
man	92	88	94	86	79	89	89	89	83
man's communication as reported by									
woman	85	70	67	55	59	58	73	68	70
man	77	77	85	72	68	72	80	74	74
mutual communication as reported by									
woman	76	73	66	70	66	70	76	70	73
man	79	82	85	82	61	76	79	79	82
<u>Couple C</u>									
woman's communication as reported by									
woman	44	44	49	49	51	54	49	56	64
man	82	76	56	74	70	73	76	68	68
man's communication as reported by									
woman	56	61	76	62	71	68	67	74	79
man	51	56	56	54	56	51	51	51	59
mutual communication as reported by									
woman	58	64	82	76	79	73	70	82	85
man	70	70	70	76	73	70	76	66	70

TABLE 29--Continued

Couple	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	(In Percentages)								
<u>Couple D</u>									
woman's communication as reported by									
woman	74	80	85	82	85	87	85	90	74
man	71	73	82	76	79	76	80	76	83
man's communication as reported by									
woman	95	91	94	98	97	95	95	91	97
man	54	49	68	68	59	62	70	62	74
mutual communication as reported by									
woman	88	79	88	85	76	85	85	88	85
man	64	70	76	88	73	76	82	76	88
<u>Couple E</u>									
woman's communication as reported by									
woman	46	41	64	59	68	70	82	80	82
man	68	64	79	76	97	88	89	79	95
man's communication as reported by									
woman	68	32	76	59	82	85	89	80	86
man	68	64	68	72	82	72	85	82	82
mutual communication as reported by									
woman	66	52	76	73	82	88	88	88	76
man	73	70	76	88	88	85	85	91	91
<u>Couple F</u>									
woman's communication as reported by									
woman	68	72	74	77	80	77	74	72	74
man	86	82	77	83	74	82	82	80	83
man's communication as reported by									
woman	79	73	79	79	85	77	80	77	91
man	68	68	54	59	59	56	59	56	70
mutual communication as reported by									
woman	79	85	85	91	85	85	91	82	91
man	82	79	82	85	79	85	79	82	76

C H A P T E R V

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to evaluate a couples' workshop in relationship-building skills (RBW). This workshop was conducted in eight Tuesday evening sessions in the fall of 1973. The sessions were held at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. The participants were student couples at the University who had responded to an ad concerning the workshop.

Measurements were taken before, during, and after the RBW with the following instruments: the Marital Communications Inventory (MCI), video-taped simulated conflicts, open-ended evaluations, and a facilitators' log. A four-month follow-up evaluation was also conducted to determine the persistence or non-persistence of the effects of the workshop.

As the results of the study are interpreted in this chapter, two basic questions will be addressed: 1) did the couples' communications improve over the course of the RBW (and possibly four months beyond)? and 2) if they did improve, what was most responsible for the improvement?

Consideration of these questions will be followed by a discussion of the limitations of the study.

Chapter V will conclude with a summary of the chapter and the implications drawn from it.

Indications of Change in the Individuals and Couples

Couple A

Woman A: According to the data presented in Figure 1, Woman A's MCI scores did increase over the period of the workshop and for four months afterward. This improvement is given additional weight by both Woman A's and Man A's evaluations that Woman A had increased in her ability to speak her position more assertively and to attend to Man A's communication.

A contradiction in data is plausible since Woman A did not show any increase in the CR skills as scored on the pre- and post-treatment video tapes. A discussion of the possible reasons for this contradiction will be left until the section of this chapter which deals with the group changes.

Man A: Woman A's rating of Man A's communication as measured by the MCI (Figure 2) shows an increase over the period of the workshop and for four months afterward. Man A's rating of his communication as measured by the MCI disagrees with Woman A's rating and shows no overall improvement. The video tapes also indicate no overall improvement for Man A's skills acquisition.

Both Man A and Woman A state that they think Man A is less dominating and more attending to Woman A's communication. This relaxation in domination was also noted in the facilitators' log. Thus Man A may have facilitated his

communications with Woman A, at least in behaving in a less dominating way towards her.

Couple A's Mutual Communication: Couple A's Mutual communications as measured by the MCI (Figure 3) shows an increase over the period of the workshop and for four months afterwards. Couple A support this record of improvement with their claims that their communications are more open, direct and serious. They also claim that they are better able to handle their feelings and their mutual problem solving more constructively.

The claim of improvement in Couple A's Mutual communications is not supported by their video tape results. This apparent contradiction will be discussed later in this chapter.

Couple B

Woman B: According to the data presented in Figure 4, Woman B's MCI scores showed no overall increase over the period of the workshop and the four months following it. This finding is contrasted by the video tapes on which Woman B did show an increase in communication skills acquisition. Man B finds Woman B more understanding of their relationship, while Woman B describes herself as more assertive in stating her feelings and ideas. Woman B also describes herself as more confident in Problem-Solving and Attending behaviors.

The facilitators' log indicates that Woman B did increase her assertive behaviors over the course of the workshop.

Thus there are indications that Woman B did facilitate her communications by becoming more assertive of her Position. The conflict between the video tape results and the MCI results will be discussed later in this chapter.

Man B: According to the data presented in Figure 5, Man B's MCI scores show no overall improvement over the period of the RBW and the following four months. However, the video tapes do indicate increased use of communication skills. Both Woman B and Man B see Man B as better in Attending skills. The facilitators' log indicates that Man B did undergo some stressful changes in becoming aware of his partner-dominating behaviors.

Thus Man B may have become more aware of his poor receptivity to Woman B's communication and may have improved that receptivity as a result of the RBW. The contradicting evidence from the MCI will be discussed later in the chapter.

Couple B's Mutual Communication: According to the data presented in Figure 6 there was no overall improvement in Couple B's Mutual communications as measured by the MCI over the course of the workshop and four months beyond. This is contradicted by overall increases in Couple B's use of the CR skills on the video tapes and by their reported increased use of Attending and Problem-Solving skills. The facilitators' log also indicates that Couple B demonstrated their

problem-solving abilities. Thus for Couple B there seems a distinct possibility that their communication was facilitated over the course of the workshop, but that the MCI was not an appropriate measuring instrument for their communications. This possibility will be further discussed later in this chapter.

Couple C

Woman C: According to the data presented in Figure 7, Woman C and Man C disagree on their MCI ratings as to whether Woman C improved in her communications or not. Woman C rates her communications as improved; Man C does not. The video tape scores indicate that Woman C has not increased in her use of the CR skills. Man C's evaluation notes that Woman C has become more assertive and more attentive. This is confirmed by Woman C's report of a confrontation with Man C which she initiated. The facilitators' log reports that Couple C did have difficulty in working on their relationship and that Man C seemed to dominate most of their interactions.

Thus Woman C may have become more assertive in her communications with Man C, but her overall facilitation of her communications is not substantiated.

Man C: According to the data presented in Figure 8, Woman C's MCI ratings of Man C's communication did increase over the period of the workshop and for four months afterwards. Man C on the MCI does not rate his communication as

improved over this period. Neither do the video tapes indicate any overall increase in his use of the CR skills. The only other signs of communication facilitation are their evaluations. Woman C says that Man C is more verbally expressive to her. Man C says that he is better at Attending to and accommodating Woman C's needs. The facilitators' log indicates some reluctance in Man C to changing his communication behaviors. Thus there seems only a small amount of communication facilitation evident here for Man C.

Couple C's Mutual Communication: According to the data presented in Figure 9, Woman C's MCI rating of their Mutual communication did increase over the period of the workshop and for four months afterwards. Man C's MCI rating on their Mutual communication did not increase. This consistent disagreement between Woman C and Man C forms a pattern which may be related to their personalities. Clinical observations indicated that Man C tended to be pessimistic and sarcastic, while Woman C tended to be more optimistic in her outlook. Perhaps these differences greatly influenced their scoring of the MCI.

There can be no doubt, however, that their video scores did not indicate overall increase in the use of CR skills. This contradicts the claims of Woman C that they are generally communicating better.

It seems then that Woman C and Man C disagree on their communications facilitation and that the data disagrees also.

Therefore no clear statement of facilitation of their Mutual communications can be made.

Couple D

Woman D: According to the data presented in Figure 10, Woman D's MCI scores did increase over the period of the workshop and remained at an increased level for four months afterward. The video tapes also indicate overall increase in the use of CR skills. Man D describes Woman D as being more confident and assured. Woman D describes herself as more attentive and expressive with Man D. The facilitators' log mentions that Couple D demonstrated some resistances in the forms of giggling, tardiness, and superficial interaction with each other.

The bulk of the evidence indicates that Woman D did increase in her communication facilitation over the six months of the workshop and follow-up.

Man D: According to the data in Figure 11, Man D's MCI rating of his own communication did increase over the period of the RBW and for four months afterward. Woman D's MCI rating of Man D's communication did not increase. Neither do the video tapes score any overall increase in the use of CR skills. Woman D says in her four-months follow-up evaluation that Man D is more receptive and excited about things she is doing. Man D says that he is trying to become a better

listener. The facilitators' log describes Man D as difficult to persuade to work seriously on his couple relationship.

It seems then, that although Man D may have been trying to become a better listener (and he may even have seen himself as a better listener), the overall evidence does not substantiate this. The video tape scores disagree and Woman D disagrees on her MCI scores. However, Woman D does rate Man D an increase on the MCI between session #8 and the four-month follow-up. This is the same time period for which she says that he is more receptive and excited about what she is doing. It seems that the improvement in communications did occur but that it was not really evident until four months after the RBW.

Couple D's Mutual Communications: According to the data presented in Figure 12, Man D's MCI rating of their Mutual communications increased over the period of time during which the RBW occurred and for four months afterward. Woman D's MCI rating of their Mutual communications did not increase during this period. However, the video tapes do indicate overall increase in the use of CR skills. Man D reports only that their communication contains more feedback jargon now.

It is interesting that it is Man D's ratings of their Mutual communication that improves, but it is Woman D's increased use of CR skills which brings their video scores to a higher level. Thus Man D on the MCI consistently rates improvement in Woman D's communication, his communication,

and their mutual communication. Woman D on the MCI rates improvement only in her own communication (as do the video tapes). Perhaps Man D is idealizing their communication. Perhaps Woman D is overly pessimistic about it.

In any case, there is some evidence that their Mutual communication was facilitated over the course of the workshop and the following four months.

Couple E

Woman E: According to the data presented in Figure 13, Woman E's MCI ratings did increase over the period of the workshop and for four months afterward. This is given additional weight by Couple E's view of Woman E's behavior as more expressive and assertive of herself in her interactions with Man E. The facilitators' log adds that Woman E participated enthusiastically in the RBW training, that she disliked but learned from the video feedback, and that she moved away from clinging to Man E during the sessions. This evidence indicates clearly that Woman E did facilitate her communications, especially in her assertiveness and expressiveness of herself with Man E.

The only contradictory evidence is the lack of increase in the use of CR skills evident from the video tapes. This, as will be discussed later, may be related to her reaction to the use of the video tape.

Man E: According to the data presented in Figure 14, Man E's MCI scores did increase over the period of the workshop and for four months afterward. The video tapes also indicate overall increase in Man E's use of the CR skills. Couple E describe Man E as more relaxed in working out problems with Woman E and in waiting for her to enter her opinions. The facilitators' log indicates that Man E seemed to make some progress in reducing his tendencies to dominate Woman E in their interactions. The log also observed much mutual affection in Couple E and much enthusiasm in their work in the RBW.

The compiled evidence clearly indicates that Man E did facilitate his communications with Woman E over the course of the workshop and the four month follow-up.

Couple E's Mutual Communication: According to the data presented in Figure 15, Couple E's MCI ratings of their Mutual communication did increase over the period of the workshop and for four months afterward. Both Woman E and Man E confirmed this in saying that although their conflicts continue, they are now able to resolve them much more satisfactorily.

It seems that Couple E did facilitate their Mutual communications over the course of the workshop plus four months. The only contradiction to this conclusion is the overall video tape scores. Here Woman E decreases their Mutual

communication score. As previously mentioned, this video contradiction will be discussed later in this chapter.

Couple F

Woman F: According to the MCI data presented in Figure 16, Woman F's ratings of her own communication did increase over the period of the RBW and for four months afterward. This improvement is given confirmation by Woman F's increased use of the CR skills on the video tapes. Although Man F does not show an increase on his MCI ratings of Woman F's communication, he does say that Woman F enjoys massages, is interested in Transcendental Meditation, and is better at Attending skills. Woman F also describes herself as more relaxed and better at attending to Man F's communications. The facilitators' log states that although Woman F sometimes had difficulty in sharing her feelings in front of non-intimates, she did enter quite seriously and enthusiastically into the RBW experience.

Thus most of the evidence indicates a clear facilitation of Woman F's communication over the period of the workshop plus the following four months. The only contradiction is in Man F's MCI scores. A comment on his evaluation does indicate he "may have gotten into a routine of answering--same questions, same answers." In light of his confusion on the MCI, his contradiction to Woman F's apparent facilitated communication carries little weight.

Man F: According to the data presented in Figure 17, Man F's MCI scores did not increase over the period of time during which the workshop was conducted. The graph does show an increase in Man F's MCI scores over the four months after the RBW. The video tapes do also indicate increases in Man F's use of the CR skills. Man F reports that he tries to follow the CR outline in working on conflicts, that he likes massage, and that he has fulfilled outside of the RBW his part of a conflict resolution which he and Woman F worked out in the RBW. Woman F also affirms Man F's improvements as his being more willing to try to listen to her, to understand her, and to touch her.

If Man F did increase in his use of the CR skills, why did this not show up on the MCI scores? One answer again may be in his confusion in filling out the MCI. Woman F also mentioned that she experienced some confusion in using the MCI--she evaluated their communication over all time rather than just for the week previous. Thus both of their MCI scores may have been not so accurate as they could have been. Another explanation might be that Man F did not really integrate his new communications skills until the four months after the workshop. In any case, it is clear that Man F did demonstrate his ability to use the CR skills. His communication was facilitated at least to this degree, no matter how much he employed the skills in everyday life.

Couple F's Mutual Communication: According to the data presented in Figure 18, Woman F's MCI ratings of their Mutual communication increased over the period of the workshop and for four months afterward. This improvement is substantiated by Couple F's increase in the use of the CR skills on the video tapes. Woman F describes their Mutual communication as "much improved." Man F describes himself and Woman F as better at Attending to each other. He also notes that they try to follow the CR guidelines in problem solving. The facilitators' log adds that Couple F interacted more with each other as the RBW proceeded.

Indications are that Couple F's Mutual communication was facilitated over the course of the workshop and for four months beyond. The only contradiction to this is Man F's MCI rating, which has been previously discussed.

Indications of Change and Change Vehicles in the Group as a Whole

The graph of the means of all the couples' ratings of their communication patterns (Figure 21) shows a rising slope from the beginning of the workshop to its end and four months beyond. This visually suggests some improvement in the couples' communications over the period of this study.

In addition to the upward slope of the scores as seen on the graph, there are also statistical verifications of improvements in the couples' communications. The complete

statistical descriptions appear in Chapter IV. Summarizations will be given here.

Video Tape Scores--t-Test. A one-tailed t test was performed on the pre- and post-treatment scores of all the couples as a group on their video-taped conflict simulations (Table 7). This was done in order to determine if the improvements in their scores on the tapes were significant or could be due merely to chance. The change scores did prove significant at the .05 level of confidence. It would be a false assumption to conclude that the CR training was solely responsible for the communication improvement. However, since the CR training was the treatment which occurred between the two video tapings, and since the CR training was designed to teach the particular skills which were scored on the video tapes, the increases in the couples' uses of the CR skills seem directly related to the CR training which the couples received in the RBW.

Support for this implication comes from the participants' workshop evaluations. 17 responses were given by the couples to the questions about what in the workshop they would attribute their individual and mutual communications improvements to. All 17 named the CR training as a vehicle of communication improvement.

In answer to a question about the usefulness of the CR training in handling their everyday couple conflicts, 9 of 12 participants stated unequivocally that they found the CR

skills helpful for this purpose. 3 people gave only conditional approval, saying that 1) "the CR framework is okay but extraneous pressure may make it tough to fit it into the conflict"; 2) "it seems helpful but hasn't helped me yet"; and 3) "yes for the Attending skills but haven't tried CR or MPS (Mutual Problem Solving) yet." On the four-month follow-up evaluation, all 12 people affirmed that their use of all or some of the CR skills helped them handle conflict or potential conflict.

One important observation of the data from the couples' video tapes is that the couples improved least in their use of the Mutual Problem Solving skills. This is substantiated by their evaluations which indicated that the Attending training was the most helpful to them, and the Stating a Position training was the next most helpful to them. An examination of the graph of the means of all the couples' ratings of their communication patterns (Figure 21) also indicates no improvement after the Mutual Problem Solving training. Instead, some improvement is seen after the Attending skills training (which also focused on Stating a Position). The implication here is that the Mutual Problem Solving training was not effective with these couples. If this is the case, more attention should be given in future training to either redesigning this component or omitting it entirely. Our judgment as co-facilitators was that this particular part of the model was too long and complex. Participants seemed to

be annoyed at having to remember so many details of the Mutual Problem Solving Process.

Before leaving a discussion of the video tape scores, I must mention that *t* tests on the men's scores as a group and on the women's scores as a group did not reveal any significant changes. It has already been noted in the discussion of the individual couples' changes that some individuals and some couples did increase in their use of the CR skills on the video tapes, while others did not. In addition, some individuals improved their video scores but not their MCI scores, while other individuals improved their MCI scores but not their video scores. How can this contradiction be explained?

One explanation may lie in the nature of the measuring instruments used. Berger and others (1970) have commented on the problem of having people get accustomed to the presence of the video equipment. There is sometimes seen a tendency for people to become anxious in front of the camera. Some people will respond by withdrawing; others by "acting." Thus the use of the video equipment may have been an inhibitor in the exercise of the CR skills by some of the participants.

In so far as the use of the MCI goes, there is some indication that Couple F (who showed little or no improvement on the MCI) did not correctly use the instrument. Man F reports that he just "got into the routine of certain answers for certain questions." Woman F says she "misunderstood the

directions till the end--replied overall instead of for the week previous." Thus Couple F's evaluations may be more accurate reflections of their communications than their MCI scores.

Couple D and B also showed little or no improvement on their MCI scores. One possible explanation for this may lie in the fact that these were the only two couples in the workshop not actually living together. Couple D lived in adjoining rooms in a dormitory. Couple B lived in separate towns, although they saw each other frequently. Thus there may be a situation here in which the MCI was not so appropriate to these two couples as to those living together. Perhaps the normal problems of cohabitation which shape communication were not so much a part of these couples' experiences. Thus their answers to the MCI questions could have a tendency to remain constant.

MCI scores--t Tests. A one-tailed t test was performed on a comparison of the MCI ratings of the Woman's communication from measurement #2 and measurement #3 (Table 10). This was done in order to see if the increase in the scores was significant or if it could be due merely to chance. The results were significant at the .05 level. The implication of this result is that something occurred between measurement #2 and measurement #3 to bring about the improvement in the women's communication. This takes on more meaning when coupled with the Men's and the Mutual change scores for the

same period and with the evaluations of that particular RBW session.

A one-tailed t test was performed on a comparison of the MCI ratings of the Men's communication from measurement #2 and measurement #3 (Table 11). Another t test was applied to a comparison of the MCI ratings of the couples' Mutual communications from measurements #2 and measurements #3 (Table 12). Both tests yielded significance at the .05 level. It seems likely, from the results of these three t tests, that RBW session #2 had some positive effect on the communications of these couples. A look at their evaluations finds confirming statements. The session consisted of training in meditation and massage. The massage received 9 of 12 possible affirmations from participants. Participants found it "relaxing," "soothing," "useful as non-verbal communication to make the partner feel good." The only reservations were "we knew it before" and "it was too superficial."

There were only 5 of the possible 12 affirmations of the meditation training. Among the comments were: "it showed me I could stop and relax for a time"; "I enjoyed it, wanted to spend more time on it." Reservations included "I'm too tense; I can't do it"; "it doesn't fit my spiritual makings"; "I can relax at will"; "I knew it before"; "I can't really get into it as formal; only as mental relaxation."

It seems from the above reports that massage was much more appreciated by the participants than meditation. This

is important in that the massage involved the partners touching each other with some give and take on both parts. This seems to have been very important in improving the pattern of their communications over the following week. There is much more research to be done here on the physical give and take in relationship building.

A one-tailed t test was performed on a comparison of the MCI ratings of the Couples' Mutual communication from measurement #6 and measurement #7 (Table 13). The results were significant at the .05 level. This suggests that session #6 contained some training which helped the couples improve their communication. This would not be surprising in that session #6 was the session which put together all the communications and problem-solving skills from the previous three sessions into the CR model. Thus couples spent time in this session actually working on small but real conflicts of their own. Notes from the facilitators' log indicate that several of the couples did reach resolution in the conflicts they were working on in Session #6. Also, as has been previously mentioned, all of the couples believed that the CR training had been important to them in improving their communications with each other over the course of the RBW and for four months beyond the RBW. Thus there is good evidence to believe that session #6--the CR session--did help the couples improve their mutual communication.

A one-tailed t test was performed on a comparison of the MCI ratings of the Couples' Mutual communication from measurement #1 and measurement #8 (Table 19). The results were significant at the .05 level. The suggestion here is that the whole workshop (or parts of it) contributed to the improvement in the couples' communications.

In addition to the CR training, the couples did state that several other workshop components had been important to them in helping improve their communications. 10 of 12 participants rated the session on assessing Intimacy in their relationship (Session #7) as important. Such remarks were recorded as "it showed us we have more inhibitions and neither of us wants it that way"; "I was surprised to discover what circumstances trigger off intimate moments"; "it was new to us; our discussion is still going on"; "it helped us realize what inhibits, so we stopped doing that."

The next most valued component was the training in massage. As has been previously mentioned, it received 9 of 12 possible affirmations.

The next component in order of approval was the first session--the non-verbal "getting-acquainted exercises." This received 8 affirmations. Participants found it "fun," "good ice-breaker," "feel out others immediately," "relaxing and initiated a friendly atmosphere." The only reservation expressed was that "people were too shy to really do it."

There were three components which got 7 affirmations each:

a. The handout on questions about separateness stimulated such comments as "I realized I did need separateness"; "there is definitely a need for this, and we didn't realize it before"; "it's helpful to state that you need separateness and not feel guilty"; "it helped clear up my own ideas on my own individuality." Reservations expressed were "it's not applicable to me," "lost it"; and "not much."

b. Setting goals for the couple relationship in the workshop provoked the following comments: "it showed us our goals could change and where our true conflicts were"; "we arrived at the same 'couples' goals' independently"; "it's very important to have a shared common objective"; "it was useful for testing communication skills on." Some reservations were "it's hard to set goals without knowing what the problems are in the relationship"; "they were not so essential cause we haven't worked on them as we need to"; "they look unrealistic."

c. Setting individual goals for the year ahead brought about such responses as "it was clearing up my own ideas--I walk towards them now"; "I needed this and I'm still working on it"; "it showed me my goals had changed." Reservations recorded were "my own goals haven't changed"; "it was so-so--something to explore ourselves with."

There were 5 affirmations for meditation, although 3 of these 5 people had been using it before the workshop began. Only 1 person found it "extremely helpful"; others were mediocre in their enthusiasm.

A one-tailed *t* test was performed on a comparison of the MCI ratings of the Men's communication from measurement #3 and measurement #9 (Table 14). The results were significant at the .05 level. This covers the period of the CR training, the Intimacy session, and the four-month follow-up. This would seem to reinforce the previous evaluation statements that both the CR training and the Intimacy session were important to the participants. It also introduces the possible effect of the great unknown variable--the four months between measurements. The following tests provide additional data on the same variable.

A one-tailed *t* test was performed on a comparison of the MCI ratings of the Couples' Mutual communication from measurement #3 and measurement #9 (Table 15). The results in both tests were significant at the .05 level. Thus there is significant change in the scores over this period of time which included the CR training, the Intimacy session, the Evaluation and Creativity session, and the four-months before the follow-up evaluation. This adds more credence to the previous evaluation statements that both the CR training and the Intimacy session were helpful to the participants in improving their communications and their relationships. It

also introduces the unknown variable of the four months intervening between session #8 and the follow-up evaluation. The implication of the data is that either 1) the effects of the workshop continued over the four months to improve the couples communications or 2) other events or influences occurred in those four months to improve the couples' communications. Other data are pertinent to this also.

A one-tailed t test was performed on a comparison of the MCI ratings of the Men's communication from measurement #1 and measurement #9 (Table 19). Another one-tailed t test was performed on a comparison of the MCI ratings of the Couples' Mutual communication from measurement #1 and measurement #9 (Table 18). The results from both were significant at the .05 level. This indicates again that the couples' communications improved over the period of the total workshop plus the four-month follow-up. An implication is that the RBW was significant in helping these couples improve their communication. This is attested to by the evaluations of the couples themselves and by the Mutual Communication scores on the video tapes.

In addition to the vehicles of change for the couples already cited, one or two people mentioned the following elements of the workshop which were helpful to them: facilitators' role modeling, filling out the weekly Communications Inventories, being together as a couple only on weekends, the egalitarian atmosphere of the workshop, the Separateness

exercises, talking with the partner one night a week, and having other individuals and couples to relate to in the workshop.

A one-tailed *t* test was performed on a comparison of the MCI ratings of the Men's communication from measurement #8 and measurement #9 (Table 16). The results were significant at the .05 level. It seems from this data that the Men's communication not only did not decline after the workshop, but it did increase significantly. It implies again that the improvements in the Men's communication which seemed related to the RBW training by the other data were improvements which lasted at least until the four-month follow-up. There may also have been events during the four month interval which contributed to the improvement in the Men's communication. The follow-up evaluations designate a few events or circumstances which may account for some of the Men's continued communication improvements: 1) Couple A continued in marriage counseling; 2) Couple C had an interpersonal confrontation initiated by Woman C and yielding mutual satisfaction; 3) Couple D saw each other only on weekends, since Woman D moved to another city to attend graduate school; 4) Couple F adopted a child; 5) Couple E made a mutual decision to commit themselves to being together until September and then to do an evaluation of their relationship..

One very obvious pattern here is that both the Men's and the Couples' Mutual communication evidence more

improvement than the Women's communication. What is the meaning of this? Since the Women were definitely involved in the improved Mutual communication, it seems likely that the Women were cooperating in the communication efforts of their male partners. The graph of the means of the couples' ratings of their communication patterns (Figure 2) also indicates that the Women's communication did rise along with the Men's, although not at such significance. One very possible explanation for this may be that the Women's base level of consciousness or sensitivity to interpersonal issues was higher than the Men's base level. This would not be surprising in view of our cultural sex roles for men and women, although this seems to be changing somewhat now. Much has been written in recent years that characterizes these roles. The role distinction in terms of feelings is that men are taught to withhold or sublimate or loudly discharge their feelings. Women are taught to be feeling and sensitive persons, ever ready to listen and understand (Fast, 1971). There is some indication from our clinical observations as facilitators that Men A, B, C, E, and F had some difficulty in expressing their feelings and in utilizing their feelings to work on interpersonal conflicts. There is also evident in the self-report accounts of the changes of the individual couples, the fact that every Man was seen as having improved his Attending behavior. Only three of the Women were reported to have increased their Attending behaviors, while

the other three were reported to have increased their Stating-a-Position behaviors. Thus it may very well be that the Men improved more in their communication patterns because they had further to go in developing these skills and sensitivities than the Women did.

MCI Scores--Analyses of Variance. The basic question which the analysis of variance is used to answer in this study is: to what is the variation in MCI scores due? The results of the analyses indicate that the variation is due primarily to two factors--1) individual differences among the participants and 2) the effects of time (which includes the Relationship-Building Workshop). All eight of the analyses of variance which were performed on the data indicate confirmation of this hypothesis at the .01 level.

Both the Men's and the Women's adjusted MCI raw scores were subjected to analyses of variance (Tables 20 and 23). The adjusted percentage scores on their Mutual Communication was also subjected to an analysis of variance (Table 26). All three scores were significant at the .01 level and suggest that the increases in the Men's, the Women's and their Mutual Communication scores are related to the effects of the RBW on them.

It seemed likely that the deviant scores of both Man B and Woman B were diminishing F values in the above analyses. In order to test this out, Man B was deleted from the Men's scores and Woman B was deleted from the Women's scores. Then analyses of variance were performed on the remaining adjusted

MCI raw scores of the remaining five Men and the remaining five Women (Tables 21 and 24). As expected, the F values did rise for the Men and the Women (and were still significant at the .01 level). Why were Couple B's scores so regressive? Our clinical observations were these: Couple B were young and were not living together. They seemed to view their relationship initially as somewhat idyllic. As the RBW progressed, they began to explore more of the tensions and conflicts which existed between them. By the end of the workshop, they seemed to have clarified some of their positions with each other. Thus their interactions seemed more realistic and open. Man B admitted excitement and anxiety about Woman B's demands on him. Woman B appreciated herself for being more assertive in making her demands. The graphs of their communications (Figures 4, 5, and 6) illustrate this evolution. Thus while their scoring pattern of diminishing and then increasing communication does not produce statistical significance, it may have been for this couple a necessary step in improving their relationship.

In order to test the robustness of the analyses, the scores of those who had increased most were deleted. Man A and Woman D were deleted from the MCI raw scores of the Men and the Women respectively (Tables 22 and 25). Woman A and Woman E were deleted from the analysis of the MCI percentage scoring of the Mutual Communication (Table 27). In all three analyses, as predicted, the F values did decrease, although

they still remained significant at the .01 level. This indicates that the significance does not depend on the high increase of one person but is based more solidly on the consistent increases of the whole group or groups. All of the analyses of variance clearly show that the variation in scores was due to 1) individual differences and to 2) RBW effects (at least somewhat). It is, of course, impossible to claim that no other factors outside of the workshop influenced the couples' scores on their weekly MCI's. There were no such tight controls. However, the evidence from the analyses of variance combined with the other data do indicate that the workshop did help the couples improve their communications.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study. The first one concerns two of the couples in the workshop. Couple A, entered the workshop while the woman was also in psychotherapy. The psychotherapy was a confounding variable. The couple also entered marriage counseling during the course of the workshop. Whatever improvements they might evidence cannot be seen as clearly related to the workshop.

Couple F, were unable to attend one of the workshop meetings because of the serious illness of a close relative. However, they did make up what they had missed by attending a private session. Thus, technically, this couple did not

receive the exact same training as the other couples, but the approximation was very close.

Another limitation is that the facilitators' log is incomplete. The observations from each session were always discussed in preparation for designing the next session, but, they were not always written down. This means that log data for some meetings was either completely missing or dependent on recall a couple of months after the event. The value of consistently recording the log was not so clear until this chapter was written. Some of the data from the log was invaluable in helping to interpret and integrate all of the other data.

The small size of the "sample" is another limitation. It is very difficult to establish much statistical significance with so few people. For the exploratory purposes of this study, that problem is not monumental. Any follow-up study should use a much larger sample.

A final limitation to be mentioned is that which would appear most obvious to the experimental researcher--the absence of a control group. It is sufficient to note that for the purposes of this study--an exploratory evaluation of a workshop in relationship-building--a control group was not necessary. There was no attempt here to prove or disprove a generalizable hypothesis--only an attempt to find the value of this training to its participants so that, in the mode of

action research, other workshops may be designed which improve on this one.

Summary

Chapter V began with a brief overview of the Couples Relationship-Building Workshop held at the University of Massachusetts in the fall of 1973. Then followed a discussion of the changes in communication each individual and each couple underwent over the period of the RBW and the following four months. Summaries of these changes can be found at the conclusion of each discussion of each person and of the couple's mutual communication.

T tests and analyses of variance were used to draw conclusions from the data of the Marital Communications Inventory (MCI) and the video-taped conflict simulations. Qualitative data was also integrated to provide a more complete picture of the changes that these individuals and groups of individuals (Men, Women, Couples) underwent in their communications patterns.

Two questions were posed at the beginning of this chapter: 1) did the couples' communications improve over the course of the RBW and 2) if they did, to what were the improvements related? The analyzed data from the MCI, the video tapes, the participants' evaluations, and the facilitators' log provide adequate bases upon which to answer these

questions. The following are the answers as found in the major and minor implications of the data.

Major Implications.

1. Although there were some individual exceptions, the communications of the participants and couples overall did improve over the period of the RBW and remained improved over the four months afterward.

2. The Couples' Relationship-Building Workshop was effective in helping these couples and individuals improve their communications.

3. The Conflict Resolution skills training in the RBW was primarily responsible for the increased communication skills which the couples and individuals learned over the course of the RBW.

Minor Implications.

1. Massage helped each couple to raise the level of their communications. This implies that this physical give-and-take between these couples is a vital part of a growing relationship for them.

2. Attending was the most influential and valued of the CR skills taught.

3. Mutual Problem Solving was the least influential and valued of the CR skills taught.

4. The session on assessing Intimacy in each couple's relationship was a valued experience for most of the participants.

5. The "getting acquainted" exercises in the first session were important to most participants in order to make them feel more at ease in revealing their feelings and opinions.

6. There were some problems in the use of video tapes and the MCI as instruments. The video tapes created extra anxiety in some participants which may have limited their usefulness as an effective measure of demonstrated CR skills. The MCI was incorrectly used by one couple and perhaps was inappropriate for use with two couples who were not living together.

7. The sex role patterns of the "dominating" male and the "sensitive, feeling" female were evident to some degree in this workshop and at least partially explain why the men evidenced more increase in communication than the women.

Other implications and questions may be drawn from this study. Some of them appear in the discussion of the individual couples. Some appear in the additional evaluation material in Appendix IV. The data in this study was voluminous, especially that of the open-ended evaluations. Every attempt has been made to include data (of whatever nature) where it appeared relevant.

Several limitations of the study were cited and discussed: 1) one of the couples in the workshop was involved in marriage counseling concurrently; 2) another couple missed but made up one session; 3) the facilitators' log is

incomplete; 4) the sample size is small; and 5) there was no control group.

Perhaps the final conclusion to be drawn from this study is a confirmation of the assumption which underlay the study-- that the mode of action research, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data, is an appropriate and useful approach to evaluating a workshop in teaching relationship-building skills to couples.

APPENDIX I

Advertisement for the Relationship Building Workshop
and Application for the Workshop

WORKSHOP for COUPLES

221

(married or in other extended relationships)

Building an exciting and effective
relationship

thru training in

--trust building
--meditation
--massage
--maintaining your
own individuality
--hearing and
being heard

--mutual problem solving
--resolving conflicts
--developing intimacy
--sexuality
--mutual creative
expression

Tues. nights: Oct. 23-Dec. 11
7:30-9:30 pm

Workshop conducted by

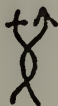
David Andes, Ed.D candidate

Susan Wartman, M.Ed.

Contact David by Oct. 15 at

545-0333 (M-Th day)

1-369-4649 (other)



A program of The Student Development and Career Planning
Center

Application for Couples' Workshop

222

Oct. - Dec. 1973

Co-leaders: David Andes
Susan Wartman

Student Development & Career
Planning Center
Univ. of Mass., Amherst

Name _____

Age _____

Address _____

Telephone, (home) _____

(business) _____

Reason for wanting to enter the workshop:

Participants in this couples' workshop are asked to meet the following criteria:

1. Be willing to attend all eight Tuesday evening sessions plus the two video taping sessions.
2. Agree to fill out a brief communications inventory at the beginning of each session.
3. This workshop is not intended to be either individual, group or couples therapy. It is a training program in relationship building skills. Yet some of the content included may produce some anxiety or stress. This workshop is to be entered voluntarily and with this knowledge. It is assumed that if you are currently in treatment for emotional difficulties or in psychotherapy, you have discussed your participation in this workshop with your therapist.
4. Videotaping will be done of each couple before, during, and after sessions three-six. The tapes before and after will be used as data in the compilation and documentation of a doctoral dissertation here at U. Mass. The tapes will be aired only in professional settings in connection with the dissertation. Confidentiality of the tapes + *Divul* will be protected.

PLEASE READ AND SIGN: I have read and do agree to the above conditions for participating in the Couples' Workshop.

Signature _____

APPENDIX II

Detailed Description of the Relationship
Building Workshop

APPENDIX II

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING WORKSHOPAN OUTLINESESSION I

October 23, 1973

I. Introduction

1. Introduction of co-facilitators--Susan Wartman and David Andes.
2. Introduction of Marital Communications Inventory. (Appendix III.) Participants fill them out.
3. Introduction of participants. People are asked to give their names coupled with a motion.
4. Guidelines for the workshop: why we're doing it, the importance of people coming to all sessions, the value of honesty here and speaking out when you're uncomfortable, the usefulness of being supportive to your partner and other couples.

II. Mutual Goal Setting for the Workshop

1. Individuals withdraw and set their own goals for their relationship as a result of this workshop.
2. Participants are asked to make their goals more behavioral, and specific--"How would I, my partner, or we act? What would we be saying or doing if this goal were accomplished?"
3. Each participant shares the goals with his/her partner. The partner repeats the goals in his/her own words to be sure he/she understands it. No evaluative comments are allowed. Sue and David model this type of listening.
4. Partners negotiate for a mutual relationship goal or goals for the workshop.
5. The couple pairs with another couple. Partners share their goals with opposite sex member of the other couple. Listeners must check to be sure she/he understands clearly what the other person has said and that it is realistic and specific.

III. Large Group Discussion

Each person shares her/his personal and couple goals and gets any necessary clarification or feedback from the group on them.

IV. Getting to Know Each Other Exercises

Participants are asked to see what they can find out about other people in the group by: 1) having a non-verbal conversation, sitting back-to-back and relating with their backs; 2) standing facing each other, placing their finger tips on those of the other, and exchanging leadership of movement of the hands; 3) clasping the forearms of the other and trying to throw her/him off balance; and 4) playing the kid's hand-slapping game. One holds his/her hands in front of him/her palms down; the other's hands are held under these hands palms up. The one with palms up tries to strike the top of the hands above before the other can remove his/her hands.

V. Large Group Discussion

What did people learn about their partners? about themselves? How did they feel about the evening? Were they committed to the next 7 weeks?

SESSION II

October 30, 1973

GETTING IN TOUCH WITH SELF AND OTHERS THROUGH MEDITATION AND MESSAGE

- 7:35 Participants fill out Marital Communications Inventory.
 - 7:45 Susan and David introduce and give rationale for using meditation and message as aids in relationship building.
 - 7:55 David teaches a basic meditation. People sit in comfortable positions, close their eyes, and focus their attention on their breathing for fifteen minutes.
 - 8:20 Susan demonstrates a head and shoulders massage and basic massage principles on David. Partners practice the new skill on each other.
 - 9:00 Partners share with each other their experience of the massage.
 - 9:00 Whole group discussion of the evening's activities. Handouts are given on massage techniques and instructions for a full body massage. Couples are encouraged to try both the massage and the meditation at home.
- Couples are scheduled for video taping sessions during the coming week--their first tape of a simulated conflict situation.

SESSION III

November 6, 1973

KNOWING AND STATING YOUR POSITION
(First of four CR sessions)

- 7:35 Marital Communications Inventory.
- 7:45 Whole group discussion: reactions or experiences with meditation and/or massage. What did you try? What happened?
- 7:55 Maintaining individuality--David briefly outlines the importance of each partner knowing her/his position (feelings, wants, beliefs) and expressing this to the other.
1. People are asked to take a few minutes within themselves and think about: a) what they really like to do apart from their partners, b) what they get out of this activity, and c) what they want from their partners in regards to this activity.
 2. Then the men form a circle and state their positions (as outlined in a, b, and c). The women form an outer circle and listen attentively to what their partners say, recording their own feelings as they listen.
 3. Switch positions. Men and women exchange circles. Women present their positions and men listen and record their own feelings. (Susan and David model the above two exercises before the participants try them.)
- 8:40 The group is divided into two small groups with men and women in each, but no one is in the same group as their partner. People are asked to share what they felt as they listened to their partners state their positions. Others in the group function to help the speakers clarify their feelings.
- 9:00 Partners meet together to share with each other what they felt when listening to the other express his/her position. As one partner speaks the other is to listen without arguing and to check out his/her understanding of what the partner is saying.
- 9:15 Large group discussion. What did you experience this evening? What did it mean to you:
- Books recommended: Open Marriage by O'Neill and O'Neill.
Becoming Partners: Marriage and Its Alternatives by Rogers.
- Handouts, homework: Participants were given several questions about how they view and exercise their

separateness in their intimate relationship (Appendix IV). They are asked to spend time thinking about these for next time.

SESSION IV

November 13, 1973

ATTENDING (LISTENING) TO A POSITION (CR training #2)

- 7:35 Marital Communications Inventory.
- 7:45 Individual goals for the year. Guideline sheets are handed out and people are asked to come up with their own personal goals for the coming year in their individual lives. They do this apart from their partners.
- 8:00 David reviews guidelines for "Stating a Position" and introduces "Attending" (or good listening) skill guidelines (Appendices V and VII).
- Susan presents a video modeling tape of good and bad attending behaviors. Questions are answered on these new skills.
- 8:10 The group is divided into two smaller groups. Within each small group are three couples and one facilitator. Each couple is given twenty-five minutes within which they are video-taped as they present their positions (goals for the year) to each other and practice attending skills in hearing these positions. During this time they (with the others in the small group) also view the video tape, rate their performance of the assigned skills according to a rating sheet (Appendix VIII), and critique their own performance at the end. They can also get feedback from others in the group if they wish.
- 9:20 Whole group closure. How did it go?

SESSION V

November 20, 1973

MUTUAL PROBLEM SOLVING (CR training #3)

- 7:35 Marital Communications Inventory.
- 7:45 Each person meets with his/her partner and they review their original goal for the workshop (as set in session #1). They update and modify the original goals in whatever ways seem necessary.

- 7:55 David gives an introduction to the mutual problem solving process and hands out a descriptive outline of the process (Appendix IX).

Susan and David present a modeling videotape on how to use the mutual problem solving process. Questions on the process are entertained.

- 8:10 Again the larger group is broken up into two smaller groups, making sure that couples are with a different set of couples this week than last. Each couple takes a turn at working on their problem--how to meet their goal for the workshop. The process is video-taped and replayed for all to view and rate their use of the problem solving skills (Appendix X). As before, the couples first give themselves feedback on their use of the problem-solving skills. Then they are given the opportunity to hear the feedback of others if they so desire.

There should have been a full-group discussion and closing, but time did not permit.

SESSION VI

CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CR session #4)

November 27, 1973

- 7:40 Fill out Communications Inventory.
- 7:50 David gives an introduction to the area of conflict and conflict resolution. Then he hands out an outline of the CR model (Appendix XI), explains its context, and goes over it for clarification. The model is presented as a combination of the processes we have taught over the past three sessions.
- 8:00 Susan asks the partner in each couple who has the most difficulty in expressing anger to separate from her/his partner and formulate her/his position on something that she/he is angry or bothered about. They are asked to make it small issues--not major ones--so that they will be able to get some satisfaction in a ten-minute period. WE offer role play situations to anyone who can't think of a real issue, but no one needs the help.

The other partner is instructed to review the guidelines for attending to his/her partner's position. He/she is asked to prepare for being non-defensive and open to what the other person has to say.

8:10 David gives a brief instruction on giving feedback in the small groups. People are asked to comment on their own feelings and observations and not guess the feelings and motivations of others. Our intent of avoiding an encounter group atmosphere is restated.

8:15 People are again divided into two groups of three couples each and are sent to separate rooms.

Each couple is given ten minutes to work on their conflict before the other couples and Susan or me. Everyone then fills out a rating sheet on the total CR process (Appendix XII) for each couple. And again each couple gives feedback to themselves followed by opportunity for feedback from others in the group. The emphasis here is on how well each couple do whatever of the process they manage to get through. They are not expected to finish.

9:15 Large group discussion. How did it go using the CR process? What did you like or dislike about this evening? about the last session? the use of video tape? of small group feedback?

David schedules with each couple a private taping of a simulated conflict situation during the next week.

Bach and Weyden's The Intimate Enemy is recommended for reading.

SESSION VII

INTIMACY

December 4, 1973

7:35 Communications Inventory.

7:45 The evening's exercises are introduced with the suggestion that if any issue arises to provoke conflict between the partners, they should make a note of the issue and make an appointment with each other to discuss it at a later time.

Partners are then asked to separate physically and to think of one sexual and one non-sexual intimate experience which they have enjoyed with their partners. They then come together and share with the partners what the experience was and why it was meaningful. The function of the listener, as each takes her/his turn, is to practice the attending skills and to reflect the content and feelings she/he hears. She/he may also want to share her/his own feelings in response to the partner's message.

- 8:00 Partners are again asked to separate physically and to think of three things which the other person does which tends to keep this partner away from him/her. Once this is done, the partners come together but still must maintain a distance of at least three feet. In turn they each share with the other what they have thought of. Again, the listener is to reflect the content and feelings. The listener is also to refrain from defending her/himself. Her/his only function now is to understand.

Partners separate again. This time each is to consider the question, "What do you do that draws me towards you?" As they come together this time they may sit at any comfortable distance, touching if they prefer. They again share their thoughts and again listen and reflect what they hear.

- 8:30 Each couple now selects any other couple to sit with. They are asked to share with that couple any of what they learned just now that they feel comfortable enough to share. The listening couple is to practice understanding and reflecting back what they hear to the first couple.
- 8:50 Large group discussion. Were you aware before this exercise of your partner's feelings as he/she expressed them? Were there any important learnings that you would be willing to share with this large group? How did it feel to listen to your partner telling you these things? How did it feel to share these with another couple? Which were the hardest or easiest of these exercises to do?

SESSION VIII

MUTUAL CREATIVITY

December 11, 1973

- 7:35 Communications Inventory.
- 7:45 Each individual is asked to fill out a four-page written evaluation of the workshop (Appendix XIII). (Unfortunately and fortunately, the participants spent close to an hour on these evaluations. Thus I got a lot of data, but they lost a lot of time for the evening's other activities.)
- 8:40 We break briefly to enjoy some of the goodies--food and beverage--which participants have brought to share with each other. During and after this each couple makes a collage to represent them both--apart and together. We share the collages in the full group, say good-byes and conclude the workshop.

APPENDIX III

The Marital Communication Inventory
(Female and Male Forms)

	SOME- USUALLY TIMES	SELDOM	NEVER
1. Do you and your wife discuss the manner in which the family income should be spent?	—	—	—
2. Does she discuss her work and interests with you?	—	—	—
3. Do you have a tendency to keep your feelings to yourself?	—	—	—
4. Is your wife's tone of voice irritating?	—	—	—
5. Does she have a tendency to say things which would be better left unsaid?	—	—	—
6. Are your nighttime conversations easy and pleasant?	—	—	—
7. Do you find it necessary to keep after her about her faults?	—	—	—
8. Does she seem to understand your feelings?	—	—	—
9. Does your wife nag you?	—	—	—
10. Does she listen to what you have to say?	—	—	—
11. Does it upset you to a great extent when your wife is angry with you?	—	—	—
12. Does she pay you compliments and say nice things to you?	—	—	—
13. Is it hard to understand your wife's feelings and attitudes?	—	—	—
14. Is she affectionate toward you?	—	—	—
15. Does she let you finish talking before responding to what you are saying?	—	—	—
16. Do you and your wife remain silent for long periods when you are angry with one another?	—	—	—
17. Does she allow you to pursue your own interests and activities even if they are different from hers?	—	—	—
18. Does she try to lift your spirits when you are depressed or discouraged?	—	—	—
19. Do you fail to express disagreement with her because you are afraid she will get angry?	—	—	—
20. Does your wife complain that you don't understand her?	—	—	—
21. Do you let your wife know when you are displeased with her?	—	—	—
22. Do you feel she says one thing but really means another?	—	—	—
23. Do you help her understand you by saying how you think, feel, and believe?	—	—	—
24. Do you and your wife find it hard to disagree with one another without losing your tempers?	—	—	—
25. Do the two of you argue a lot over money?	—	—	—
26. When a problem arises that needs to be solved are you and your wife able to discuss it together (in a calm manner)?	—	—	—
27. Do you find it difficult to express your true feelings to her?	—	—	—
28. Does she offer you cooperation, encouragement and emotional support in your role (duties) as a husband?	—	—	—
29. Does your wife insult you when angry with you?	—	—	—
30. Do you and your wife engage in outside interests and activities together?	—	—	—
31. Does your wife accuse you of not listening to what she says?	—	—	—
32. Does she let you know that you are important to her?	—	—	—
33. Is it easier to confide in a friend rather than your wife?	—	—	—
34. Does she confide in others rather than in you?	—	—	—
35. Do you feel that in most matters your wife knows what you are trying to say?	—	—	—
36. Does she monopolize the conversation very much?	—	—	—
37. Do you and your wife talk about things which are of interest to both of you?	—	—	—
38. Does your wife sulk or pout very much?	—	—	—
39. Do you discuss intimate matters with her?	—	—	—
40. Do you and your wife discuss your personal problems with each other?	—	—	—
41. Can your wife tell what kind of day you have had without asking?	—	—	—
42. Does she fail to express feelings of respect and admiration for you?	—	—	—
43. Do you and your wife talk over pleasant things that happen during the day?	—	—	—
44. Do you hesitate to discuss certain things with your wife because you are afraid she might hurt your feelings?	—	—	—
45. Do you pretend you are listening to her when actually you are not really listening?	—	—	—
46. Do the two of you ever sit down just to talk things over?	—	—	—

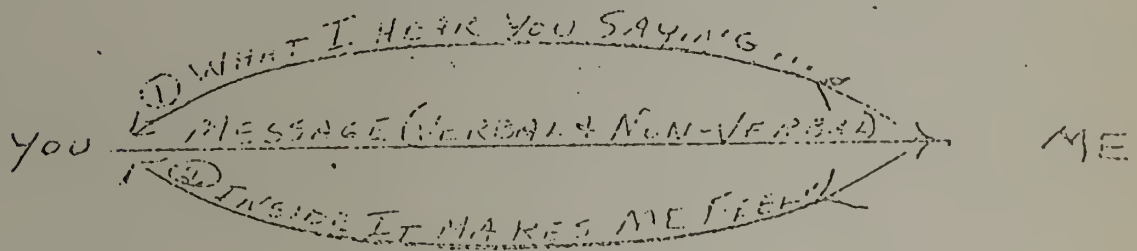
APPENDIX IV
Separateness Questions

Introduction: You are now going to think about separateness in your love relationship. Separateness is defined as: (1) Being apart from your partner in solitude, whether it be to sleep, to read a book, or to go for a walk. (2) Being involved with a friend or friends apart from your partner relationship, for example, going out with the boys, going out with the girls, going hunting with a friend, going shopping with a girl friend, etc.

The questions:

1. Do you think there is a need for separateness in a love relationship? Why?
2. What specific things do you do to be apart from your partner? How do you feel when you are doing these things?
3. What does your partner do to be apart from you? How do you feel when he or she does these things?
4. How do you initiate separateness in your relationship; in other words, how do you make it clear to your partner that you would like to be by yourself when you need to?
5. How do you encourage separateness in your partner; in other words, what feelings in behavior do you pick up from your partner that indicate that he or she would like to be apart from you?
6. What things in your relationship work against your being apart when either of you needs to be separate for awhile?

GOOD FEEDBACK MODEL



NOTE: The receiver of feedback is in charge of his own life. He can accept or reject the feedback. He can change or not change, whether or not he accepts the validity of the feedback.

Criteria for good Feedback:

- a. Descriptive of my feelings rather than evaluative of the other person.
- b. Specific rather than general.
- c. About behavior that can be changed, whenever possible.

APPENDIX V

Stating a Position: A Model

STATING A POSITION

In order to clearly communicate your position--where you stand, what is of concern to you--try the following guidelines:

1. Talk about your own feelings in the present
2. Be specific to the person and the situation
3. Be honest and direct
4. Stay on the subject. Hold your position.
5. State any demands or requests behind your feelings

DO NOT

1. make assumptions about your partner's feelings or thoughts
2. generalize, label, name call
3. overload with more than one issue at once
4. drag in a catalogue of wrongs from your past together
5. back down when confronted, unless you honestly feel you were wrong
6. make demands that are impossible for your partner to meet
7. blame, moralize, judge, interpret, psychoanalyze your partner
8. Foul--strike the tender spots in your partner as an ultimate weapon to win the fight.
9. initiate conflict if either person is weak or closed

APPENDIX VI

Personal Goals for the Year Ahead

Personal Goals for the Year Ahead

I. Not down answers to the following questions in the space provided after each.

1. How would you like to be different in a year's time?

--What new things would you be doing?

--How would you be feeling different?

2. What new people, situations, or places do you want to experience?

3. What new things would you like to try?

4. What would you leave behind of your present life?

II. As you look at your answers to these questions, what goals could you distill from them for yourself for this next year. Pick several that seem to be important and spell them out on this paper.

III. Now select one or two personal goals for this year that you'd like to share with your partner. Outline them in the following manner:

1. Specific description of the goal
2. Its importance to you
3. Your plan for reaching the goal
4. How your partner could help you reach your goal

APPENDIX VII

Attending: A Model

ATTENDING

No matter how well a position has been stated, if it is not clearly understood and if the communicator does not believe that his position is understood, the communication is incomplete. Therefore the importance of active listening or attending to the partner's position. This means more than just not interrupting or straying from the subject. It means directing a major amount of energy and attention to achieve a mutual understanding of what the partner's position is. Only after this is accomplished will he/she be really open and available to hear your position.

Here are a few guidelines for effective attending:

1. Relax physically
2. Maintain good eye contact
3. Listen without interrupting
4. Check out what you are hearing by
 - a. paraphrasing the verbal content
 - b. reflecting your partner's feelings
 - c. asking for clarification when you need it
5. Review and summarize what you understand of what was said

Do Not

1. Argue
2. Provide direct answers
3. Assume you know what your partner means
4. Interpret, analyze, psychoanalyze
5. Deliberately distort your partner's meaning
6. Discount her/his feelings
7. Jump to defend yourself
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

APPENDIX VIII

Stating and Hearing a Position:
A Scoring Sheet

Stating and Hearing a Position:
A Scoring Sheet

243

		Name					
I. <u>Stating the Position:</u>							
Answer the following questions under the presenters' names on how well they they presented their positions.							
1. How many times does the presenter state her/his feelings as a part of her/his position.							
* 2. How many times does the presenter leave his/her subject?							
3. How specific was the presenter in delineating the persons & situations involved in the issue? Rate her/him on a scale of 1-10 from "obscure" (1) to "highly specific" (10).							
4. How clearly did the presenter state her/his wants or demands. Rate 1-10 from "not at all" (1) to "very clearly" (10).							
II. <u>Hearing a Position</u>							
Using a scale of 1-10 (from "very poor" to "very good"), rate each listener in the interaction on her/his relaxation and eye contact.							
1. Relaxation							
2. Eye Contact							
Make a mark in the appropriate box for each occurrence of the following behaviors in the interaction.							
* 3. Interruptions							
4. Paraphrasing Verbal Content							
5. Reflecting Feelings							
6. Asking for Clarification							
7. Giving a final summary							
Total							

APPENDIX IX

Mutual Problem Solving: A Model

APPENDIX X

Mutual Problem Solving:
A Scoring Sheet

Math Problem Solving A Scoring Sheet

For this scoring, place the names of both people in the couple at the top of a single column. Answer the following questions by marking a "1" for "yes" or a "0" for "no" in the appropriate box beside the question (except for question 2, which requires a number count).

1. Did the couple clearly and specifically define the problem?
2. How many alternatives did the couple generate without immediate evaluation?
3. Did the couple evaluate the consequences of their alternatives?
4. Did they reach a decision?
5. If they reached a decision, did they check to be sure that it had some mutual satisfaction?
6. Did they summarize their solution? Who is to do what, when?

[illegible]

APPENDIX XI

Conflict Resolution: A Model

I. Stating a Position

- a. talk about your feelings in the present
- b. be specific to the person and the situation
- c. stay on the subject
- d. state your requests or demands

II. Attending to Your Partner's Position (Hearing and Being Heard)

- a. maintain eye contact with your partner
- b. assume a relaxed posture
- c. listen without interrupting
- d. check out what you are hearing by
 - paraphrasing the verbal content
 - reflecting your partner's feelings
 - asking for clarification when you need it
- e. review and summarize what you understand of what was said

III. Resolving the Conflict (Mutual Problem Solving)

- a. list the alternatives
- b. list and evaluate the consequences of each alternative
- *c. make a decision
- d. check out that the decision has some satisfaction for both partners
- e. what is to be done and who is to do it.

Other Helpful Practices to Facilitate Conflict Resolution:

- *1. If you are unable to reach a mutually agreeable solution, adjourn until a later, agreed-upon time when you can continue your negotiations. Use the interim to re-evaluate how much you are willing to compromise and what other possible alternatives there might be.
- 2. Meditate or relax yourself before you fight in order to center yourself on the most important issue and to let yourself be as open as possible to hearing and understanding your partner.
- 3. Pick your fight times to occur when you are both feeling strong enough to engage in the conflict.
- 4. Reading: Intimate Enemy by Bach and Weyden, Avon Press.

APPENDIX XII

Conflict Resolution:
A Scoring Sheet

I. Stating the Position:

Answer the following questions under the presenters' names on how well they they presented their positions.

1. How many times does the presenter state her/his feelings as a part of her/his position.
2. How many times does the presenter leave his/her subject?
3. How specific was the presenter in delineating the persons & situations involved in the issue? Rate her/him on a scale of 1-10 from "obscure" (1) to "highly specific" (10).
4. How clearly did the presenter state her/his wants or demands. Rate 1-10 from "not at all" (1) to "very clearly" (10).

II. Hearing a Position

Using a scale of 1-10 (from "very poor" to "very good"), rate each listener in the interaction on her/his relaxation and eye contact.

1. Relaxation
2. Eye Contact

Make a mark in the appropriate box for each occurrence of the following behaviors in the interaction.

* 3. Interruptions

4. Paraphrasing Verbal Content
5. Reflecting Feelings
6. Asking for Clarification
7. Giving a final summary

III Resolving the Conflict

Score as in 3-7 directly above

1. Listing alternatives
2. Evaluating consequences of alternatives
3. Making a decision
4. Checking to see if decision has mutual satisfaction

APPENDIX XIII

Simulated Conflict Situations Used in the Pre- and
Post-treatment Video Tapes of Each Couple

APPENDIX VIII

SIMULATED PROBLEM SITUATIONS

Simulated Problem Situation #1: Partner A: Sam or Joan

You are 25 years old and married to your spouse for 3 years. There are no children. You see yourself as a fairly quiet person--not so extroverted as your spouse. You are successful and happy in your profession--teaching music.

You have been invited to Worcester to a quiet dinner party at a fancy restaurant with some of your friends and their partners. You'd really enjoy this type of evening and you'd like to be with these friends. You'd also like your own partner to go with you, because you enjoy her/his company and you want some of your friends to get to know her/him better.

Unfortunately, your partner (and you) have also been invited to Greenfield to a beer party--a gathering of your partner's old college friends and their partners or dates. There will be loud music, lots of people, and lots of booze. You hate all three. You much prefer to get to know people in more intimate circumstances. Besides, you don't even like some of your partner's old friends.

You and your partner live in Springfield. Worcester is an hour drive east; Greenfield, an hour drive north. The parties are at the same time. You have only one car between you. What do you do?

Simulated Problem Situation #1: Partner B: Joan or Sam

You are 25 years old, married with no children. You are already a successful real estate seller. You see yourself as an extrovert--a person who really enjoys lots of people and noisy fun.

You (and your partner) have been invited to Greenfield to a beer party with some of your old college friends and their partners or dates. There will be lots of loud music, plenty of beer, and people you'd like to see. You want very much to go. And you want your partner to go, because you like having fun with her/him, you want to show her/him off to your old chums, and you want someone special to go home with. You've been looking forward to this party for some time.

Unfortunately, your partner (and you) have also been invited to Worcester to a quiet, dinner party at a fancy restaurant with some of your partner's friends and their partners. It will probably be boring and awkward for you, and you would much prefer just to let loose and have a good time at the Greenfield party.

You and your partner live in Springfield. Worcester is an hour drive east; Greenfield, an hour drive north. The parties are at the same time. You have only one car between you. What do you do?

Simulated Problem Situation #2: Partner A: Sam or Joan

You are 25 years old and have been married for 3 years. There are no children. You see yourself as a fairly quiet person--not so extroverted as your spouse. You are a graduate student in music. You are in the middle of a busy semester and find it hard to find time either for yourself or for your spouse. At last, however, both you and your spouse have the same evening free. You are delighted. Here at last is a chance for you and your spouse to spend a quiet evening together. You could play board games, do some massage, watch TV, or just talk. It doesn't even really matter. The important thing is that you be together for a quiet evening of enjoying each other. You really feel the need of this--both for yourself and for your relationship.

Unfortunately, your spouse seems to want to spend the evening out with his (her) same-sex friends, playing cards at one of their houses.

Simulated Problem Situation #2: Partner B: Joan or Sam

You are 25 years old and have been married for 3 years. There are no children. You see yourself as an extrovert--a person who really enjoys having fun with friends, just talking, laughing, drinking, being loud if you feel like it.

You are a graduate student in business. You are in the middle of a busy semester and you find it hard to get much opportunity to just relax and have a good time. At last, however, you have an evening free. Some of your same-sex friends have invited you over to one of their houses for an evening of cards and drinking. As you think about this, you really get excited. You've not done this in a long time. These are men (women) that you really like. You always have such a good time when you get together with them. And you

really need this--just a chance to unwind, let off steam, bitch about some things, and feel loose again. In fact, you figure it'll even be good for your relationship with your spouse that you get out of the house and let off some steam.

Unfortunately, your spouse seems to want you to spend the evening with him/her relaxing with a quiet evening at home.

APPENDIX XIV

Post-Workshop Evaluation Questionnaire

Relationship-Building Skills WorkshopI. Relationship Developments

1. What changes, if any, have you noticed in your partner over these 8 weeks which could be related to your experience in the workshop together? And to what in the workshop might you attribute these changes?

2. What changes, if any, have you noticed in yourself over these 8 weeks which could be related to your experience in the workshop? And to what in the workshop might you attribute these changes?

3. (If not covered above), what changes, if any, have you noticed in the way you and your partner communicate with each other over the past 8 weeks? And to what do you attribute this?

II. 'Communication Skills Component

As you recall we spent several weeks learning different mutual communication skills. Here is a brief outline of what we covered:

1. Stating a Position-putting in touch with and stating your feelings and wants on a specific issue.

II. (Con't)

2. Attending to or Hearing a Position-active listening involving good eye contact, reflection, reflecting feelings, paraphrasing, summarizing, and clarifying.
3. Mutual Problem Solving-defining the problem, generating and evaluating alternatives, coming to a mutually satisfying decision, and summarizing what is to be done.
4. Conflict Resolution-putting together parts 1,2, and 3 into a total process of presenting, hearing, and dealing with a gripe.

The following questions pertain to your learning and use of the above communication skills.

A. Learning the Skills:

Below are listed some of the processes we used in this skills training. They reflect generally sessions 4, 5, and 6. Would you look at each process and comment upon whether you found it helpful or non-helpful and why. Include any other reactions you had to that particular process.

1. Introduction to the evening's skill focus-David usually gave a brief talk about what the skill or skills were and their importance. Then he handed out and went over a sheet describing the skills in detail.
2. Modeling Process-David and Susan presented video tapes on good and bad attending skills and on mutual problem solving.
3. Couples Practice-each couple tried out using the skills in front of two other couples and David or Susan (and twice on video tape)

II. (Cont'd)

4. Rating-everyone rated the couple who had just done the skill practice (including the couple themselves).

5. Feedback

- a. Couple-each couple first gave their process evaluation of their own skill practice.
- b. Others-others in the small group were invited to give their process evaluations of the couple who had just practiced.

B. Everyday Use of the Skills:

1. Does your use of any or all of these skills seem to be helpful in handling conflicts or potential conflicts?
If you answered yes, please note which skills and how they are helpful.
If you answered no, please indicate why you think these skills are not helpful to you.
2. In what other ways has the communication skills training been useful to you and your partner in your relationship? Please be as specific as possible-which skills and how have they helped?

III. Other Components in the Workshop

1. Please describe how each of these parts of the workshop are (or were) useful or not useful to you.
 - a. meditation
 - b. massage
 - c. setting specific goals for your couple relationship (in the workshop)

III (Con't)

- indiv. material the year*
- d. setting specific goals for your ~~relationship~~ ~~(in the workshop)~~.
 - e. non-verbal "getting-acquainted" exercises in the first session.
 - f. assessing what creates or inhibits intimacy in your own relationship.
 - g. handout on massage
 - h. handout on separateness questions
2. Excluding the communication skills training, what other parts of the workshop or other factors in your life in the past 8 weeks have helped your ability to handle conflicts with your partner? How?
3. How did you feel about doing the Communications Inventory each week?
- ...the 2 private video taping sessions?
4. Is there anything you'd like to tell either Susan or David about their involvement in the workshop?

I give my permission to David Andes, as a part of his doctoral dissertation to directly or indirectly quote from this evaluation material which I have written, given the following provisions: 1) that all identifying data be removed from my statements to protect my own anonymity and 2) that no starred (*) statement may be quoted at all without my express consent.

Signed _____

APPENDIX XV

Four-Month Follow-up Evaluation Questionnaire

- As you recall we spent several weeks learning different mutual communication skills. Here is a brief outline of what we covered:

2. Attending to or Hearing a Position - active listening involving good eye contact, relaxation, reflecting feelings, paraphrasing, summarizing, and clarifying.
3. Mutual Problem Solving - defining the problem, generating and evaluating alternatives, coming to a mutually satisfying decision, and summarizing what is to be done.
4. Conflict Resolution - putting together parts 1,2, and 3 into a total process of presenting, hearing, and dealing with a gripe.

The following questions pertain to your use of the above communication skills:

1. Does your use of any or all of these skills seem to be helpful in handling conflicts or potential conflicts?
If you answered yes, please note which skills and how they are helpful. If you answered no, please indicate why you think these skills are not helpful to you.
2. In what other ways has the communication skills training been useful to you and your partner in your relationship? Please be as specific as possible-which skills and how they helped.

III. Other Components in the Workshop

1. Please describe how each of these parts of the workshop have or have not been useful to you.
 - a. meditation
 - b. message
2. Excluding the communication skills training, what other parts of the workshop or other factors in your life since the workshop have helped your ability to handle conflicts with your partner? how?

I give my permission to David Andes, as a part of his doctoral dissertation, to directly or indirectly quote from his evaluation material which I have written, given the following provisions: 1) that all identifying data be removed from my statements to protect my anonymity and 2) that no starred (*) statement may be quoted at all without my consent.

Signed _____

APPENDIX XVI

Pre- and Post-Treatment Video Tape Scoring Sheets
Used by the Independent Raters

Rater _____

Conflict Resolution
Scoring Sheet for RatersSimulation # _____
Total Time _____

ating a Position Position Presenting Feelings	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Leaving the subject	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Being Specific												
Stating wants or demanding												
aring a Position Position Eye Contact	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Interruptions	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Paraphrasing verbal Content	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Reflecting Feelings	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Asking for Clarification	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Summarizing e Other's Position												
solving the Conflict												
Listing Alternatives												
Evaluating Consequences												
Making a Decision												
Checking for ual Satisfac- tion												
Summarizing ails of Decision												

APPENDIX XVII

Responses from the Post-Workshop and Follow-up
Evaluation Questionnaires Not Used
in the Body of this Study

II.

B.

2. In what ways have the communications skills training been useful to your relationship? Which ones have been most helpful?

--Of the 10 people answering this question, 9 felt the communications training was useful to them in other than just working on conflict. The 10th thought it would be useful in the future.

--7 of the 10 picked Attending skills as the most important. 5 of the 7 thought it was useful in summing up ideas, conversations, etc. Another thought it helped in giving feedback to avoid misconstruing. Another felt more right in expressing feelings. Another added that he was glad to know for sure if his partner understood what he was saying.

- One person each mentioned the following benefits:
 - a. Mutual Problem Solving helped to locate differences and solve them
 - b. Stating the Position helped in clearly stating a problem before trying to solve it.
 - c. Setting goals made it seem important to do this outside the workshop also.

Evaluation 2

II.

2. In what other ways has the communication skills training been useful to you and your partner in your relationship? Please be as specific as possible--which skills and how they helped.

--Other uses found for CR skills: providing structure for explanations of things that happen, becoming part of the way we think, helpful in listening to kids I babysit for, helpful in general conversation, I listen more to my wife now, helped us be more "up front" in marriage.

-- 6 mentioned again how they help in dealing with problems: stating and hearing mainly, more willingness to do both.

Evaluation 1

III.

2. Excluding the communication skills training, what other parts of the workshop or other factors in your life in the past 8 weeks have helped your ability to handle conflicts with your partner? How?

- 4 people spotted outside factors as helpful to their ability to handle conflict with each other: one cited seeing a marital counselor weekly, another mentioned becoming closer to each other. A third cited getting engaged, and a fourth, committing self to stay with the relationship for nine more months and then to have an evaluation.
- 3 people felt that the relationship to others in the group was helpful--seeing others work on their problems and feeling that "we're not alone." Also, communicating with others in the workshop was cited as helpful.
- 2 people thought that just coming to the workshop together was good in providing a structured, reserved time to be together. This gave one person a "realization of the need to establish good times--in order to reduce conflicts."
- 2 people felt the massage helpful in reducing their tension to promote better work on conflict.
- Another person felt that his own personal self-exploration was helpful.
- One saw the meditation as helpful.

Evaluation 2

III.

2. Excluding the communication skills training, what other parts of the workshop or other factors in your life since the workshop have helped your ability to handle conflicts with your partner? How?

- 5 people saw other workshop related things as important in helping handle conflicts: interaction with others, workshop atmosphere, rediscovering each other as friends, seeing own problems as not as bad as those of others.
- 2 saw outside influences as important: marriage counselor, physical separation from each other for school purposes.

III.

3a. How did you feel about doing the Communications Inventory each week?

- 2 couples seemed disinterested in it--"vague," "not useful," "boring, without much change in answers."
- ~~the~~ another 4 couples found it interesting to one degree or another, and for different reasons:
- 3 people felt it helped evaluate what happened in their couple relations during the week.
- 2 people felt it heightened consciousness of their communications during the course of the week.
- 1 person thought it helped her in periodic self-control.
- 2 people had problems with the Inventory. 1 misunderstood the directions and the other kept changing his understanding of the questions and thus, of the answers.
- 1 person got a "kick out of it at first" and another found it challenging.

Evaluation 1

III.

3b. How did you feel about doing the 2 private video taping sessions?

- There was a preponderance of negative feelings about the 2 tape sessions (which may have prejudiced use of the video tape in the workshop):
- 11 of 12 people had something negative to say for it in varying degrees: "Ugh!" "Hated." "Contrived." "Not useful." "A hindrance." "Gave me the heebie-jeebies."
- 3 people who played roles contrary to their everyday living felt uncomfortable in this, though another appreciated playing a role close to his partner's real life role.
- 2 people mentioned feeling uncomfortable or self-conscious with the use of the video ~~tape~~ itself.
- 2 people thought it might be helping my dissertation, but it wasn't helping them.

Evaluation 1

III.

4. Is there anything you'd like to tell either Susan or David about their involvement in the workshop?

- No.
- Restrict encounter in group to within the prescribed bounds. Thanks for supporting assertiveness in one woman.
- Thanks.
- Do more to make us comfortable with each other. Would have been easier to open up more then. Thanks for enjoyable.
- You've helped 12 people to get along with each other better.
- Seems difficult to separate a human dynamics couple interaction from objective skills-learning workshop.
- Good facilitators, even if you were an "odd couple."
- Felt you were both well-prepared.
- (no comment)
- You're both fun time.
- The unmarried couples couldn't fully understand our problems. At times it was hard to really express myself because of this. Example: couples without kids can't really understand the problems ~~of~~ couples with kids may have. Marriage brings responsibility not known to an unmarried couple.
- Well organized, "low-key" encounter.

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